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AND GAMES

# GAMES

INTERNATIONAL

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Gotcha!

**RISK**  
Megalomania  
explained

**CARD  
CRICKET**  
Praising  
Arizona

**CASH?**  
That'll do  
nicely thank  
you

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Hound of Shadow, plus many more.







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# UPFRONT

## THE REVENGE

The one thing missing from GI is: 'An article on Jack Jaffé's wig', responded reader P M of Belfast. Yes, hullo, and welcome to the Readers' Revenge, our worldwide survey to find out what you the readers – salt of the earth, backbone of the mag etc, would like to see more and less of. We somehow doubt whether we'll be able to fulfil P M's bizarre request, but we'll do our best with the others. The most common answer to the question *which issue have you enjoyed?* the most was: 'We've enjoyed them all'. Thank you, and so have we.

Not surprisingly the General Games section proved the most popular part of the magazine. However, the majority were happy to see computer games in the mag, a reflection of the different way in which we approach the subject, and an indication of the number of computer owners amongst our readership. Apart from the charts and an antipathy towards role gaming, the vast majority of you don't object to any of the main contents. Not even the jokes.

'Is there a topic you would like to add to the main contents?' we asked. Is there ever. A vast selection here, the most popular being 'articles on games still in print'. We've considered doing this for some time, but only if we could bring a new approach to the subject. The solution we've come up with is to invite the designers of some of the classic games to describe the 'creative process' – the agony, the pain and so on. Already quite a few designers have agreed to contribute. Following up Derek Carver's piece on **Blood Royal**, will be **Win Place & Show** designer Tom Divoll. We're also looking at another of your suggestions: that of articles on games companies, though this will undoubtedly displease reader H R of Bissengen, Germany, who unceremoniously declares that he is 'interested in games, not companies'. So there.

Most of you wanted to see more 'strategy seminar' type articles, reflecting perhaps the dearth of such information. It could be said (and was by some) that if you don't own the particular game featured, then the article would hold little interest. Our feeling is, that if an article is written and presented in an attractive manner, then it will *create* interest in the game, and also help readers decide if it is worth purchasing. The features by Steve Jones and Graham Staplehurst on **1830** and **Britannia** respectively, undoubtedly gained

these excellent games a few new converts. Finally, on behalf of the staff and contributors, I would like to thank all of you for responding in such a positive manner. And now, on with the show.

## Best Issue

Number 11

## Best Article

31 nominations

1. Sharp Practices by Steve Jones in issue #11
2. Up the Poll, by Alan R Moon and Derek Carver in issue #3

## Favourite Game of All Time

38 Nominations

1. **Civilization** designed by Francis Tresham
2. **Railway Rivals** designed by David Watts

## Favourite General Game

46 Nominations

1. **Hare & Tortoise** designed by David Parlett
2. **Diplomacy** designed by Alan Calhmer

## Favourite Wargame

34 Nominations

1. **Upfront** designed by Courteney F Allen
2. **Third Reich** designed by John Prados


## Favourite Rolegame

16 Nominations

1. **AD&D** designed by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson
2. **Call of Cthulhu** designed by Sandy Petersen

## Favourite Computer Game

38 Nominations

1. **Sim City** designed by Will Wright and Robert Strobel
2. **Elite** designed by David Braben 







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## REVIEWS

## GENERAL GAMES

# GAME OF THE MONTH

## MINDEN PLAYING CARD CRICKET

DESIGNED BY  
GARY GRABER

PUBLISHED BY  
MINDEN GAMES

PRICE £5.75 (BASIC),  
£6.95 (ADVANCED)

RATING: 9

I suppose if I said there is a one man company in Peoria, Arizona producing a rather good cricket game for six quid, I would probably get some disbelieving looks. Nevertheless, it's completely true and having played **Playing Card Cricket** I think it deserves a place right up there with **International Cricket** (Lambourne Games) and **Wicketz** (Compton), reviewed in GI #8 and #4 respectively. Although a few months old now, the basic game has recently been reissued in a revised format.

In appearance, **Playing Card Cricket** is reminiscent of the excellent Lambourne series of games in that it is made to a good

amateur standard. It comes in a ziploc bag, the components are hand typed and printed on good quality card and the rule book has an attractive fanzine feel. The basic set contains a set of charts, a rule book, a book of player ratings and of course a pack of playing cards. While not likely to win any design awards, the components are clear, playable and reasonably hard wearing. At this price it is hard to quibble. The real attraction for the fortunate owners of **Wicketz** is the

chance to set up **Playing Card Cricket** using those lovely pieces. The only enhancement needed is identifying numbers on the bottom of the fielders – we used video tape stickers.

As you will guess from the title, the game uses playing cards to determine the progress of play. The system works on the basis of one card representing one over, so there is no ball by ball detail here. Despite this, the overall picture develops nicely because the flip of a card and the occasional chart reference cleverly generate runs for each player, bowling stats, extras and, of course, dismissals. The batting player gets to choose whether to bat normally, defensively or to hit out. The fielding side adjusts its bowling attack and field placing accordingly. In general, play proceeds at a good pace, and an innings took us about half an hour initially, speeding up to twenty minutes or so as we got used to the system. This allowed us to play a test match (from the 1975 Ashes – Greig 96 and 173 Not Out, Lillee 8 for 77) in about a hundred minutes (with full scoring), which could reduce even further with experience.

The booklet supplied covers the player ratings, both batting (from A++ rated Viv



Card Cricket: Some of my best friends are spades.

Richards to the tailender Fs) and bowling (from 1 to 5). Figures are provided for several major test series of the last few years and there is plenty of variety; even the Sri Lankans are represented. Unusually, most of the ratings are based on a player's performance in a single test series, which is a novel approach. This is like rating a baseball player for a World Series or a soccer player just for the Cup Final, rather than using the more traditional career figures which of course average everything out. It tends to make Botham either extremely good or extremely bad and what price a Steven Waugh card for summer '89? A nice touch is the inclusion of the formulae for rating one's own favourite players so that the latest matches, even the current West Indies tour, can be replayed with little effort. The same coverage is also extended to fans of the one day game which of course works on a different statistical basis.

The advanced set, for which you need the basic set to play, adds individual player cards, a play board based on Lords, and some more rules to the basic system. This upgrade is smooth in practice as the player cards simply replace the generic action chart from which the results are



read off. In this set, batsmen are rated for both attacking and defensive stroke play as well as displaying more detail on bowling performance. The advanced set comes with around a hundred players (these need cutting out) which should keep you interested. For the completist, there is a good range of expansion cards available covering either specific test series or historic players from one country.

Although clearly targeted at the replay games market, **Playing Card Cricket** has an accessible system that is easily learned by anyone interested in our summer game. As a cricket simulation, it delivers just about everything you could want but at the same time offers definite gaming interest. The player ratings make

them perform rather like their real life equivalent, scores are broadly realistic and of course the real appeal of sports replay is when you get the chance to bring on Michael Holding to intimidate Mike Gatting. I liked this game a lot and with its great value for money, it's a winner.

*Mike Siggins*

*Just Games will be getting the game in shortly. Alternatively, Minden Games offer an excellent mail order service and, refreshingly, accept payment in Sterling. Surface postage is included in the above prices, airmail costs £2 extra per game. Minden Games can be contacted at 10951 North 91st Avenue #244, Peoria, AZ 85345, USA.*

potato farming are portrayed and interrelate make for an enjoyable if ultimately forgettable couple of hours.

## THE SUNFLOWER EFFECT

Each farmer starts with a farm with five fields, each containing one sunflower (three of which are necessary if organic potatoes are to be grown, and all of which die should the demon fertiliser be used) and three worms. The first choice in the game is how many worms to compost, thus doubling their number over two years. The more worms in a field the greater the yield, as I'm sure any farm hand who knows his invertebrates could tell you, but as the game only lasts six years, this removes the wee beats for a full third of its length. The farming decisions now come thick and fast: to fertilise or not to fertilise; whether to spray pests into oblivion, thus earning the field concerned the feared skull and crossbones; how many fields to plough; which seeds to plant, and so on. The crunch comes at the end of each game year, as each player decides which potatoes to sell as organic, and which as normal. This is the point around which all of the financial strategy revolves, obviously, and there is a fair element of suspense as one waits to discover whether one has made the right decisions or not.

**Dicke Kartoffeln** is a good game, but demands serious rules rethinking to reach its ecological potential. I cannot, therefore, recommend it to the player who likes to be spoon fed, but if enough time and care is lavished on it you'll reap the rewards come harvest time.

*Jonathan Turner*

*Now available from Just Games.*

## DICKE KARTOFFELN

DESIGNED BY  
DORIS MATTHÄUS & FRANK NESTEL

PUBLISHED BY  
ABACUS

PRICE £18.95

RATING: 7

## SPUDS YOU'LL LIKE

**Dicke Kartoffeln** is a stockmarket game with a twist; as the subject is potato farming, there are two possible sets of victory conditions: richest farmer, or most caring, fluffy bunny, environmentally correct farmer. An excellent idea on the face of it, but as well as the unsatisfactory effect of having a shared first place, in order to win the environmental title, it is inadvisable to grow any potatoes at all, ever, which rather defeats the object of the game. Luckily, none of us saw this flaw until halfway through our game so our enjoyment was not too badly spoiled. This, and other bugs (aptly enough involving the sale of worms) aside, the game does have its redeeming features. The elegantly simple way in which the stockmarket table deals with supply and demand – no EC subsidies here – is extremely workable, and the lighthearted way in which the different varieties of

I leaned on the stile in the summer sunset, and surveyed the field before me, the sunflowers tossing their heads friskily among the more sedate leaves of the potato plants. In spite of market pressures, I had done what I knew from the depths of my love for my little farm to be right: I had not succumbed to the demon profit and allowed the spectre of chemical poisons onto my land. The worms in the soil busied about their life-giving business unharmed by the synthetic evils so prevalent on the property of my rich neighbour, farmer Mark. But for what did I need money, when I was so pure, so ecologically sound? Farmer Mike had trod the green path too for a while, but ever the dilettante, had soon flitted off to different things. Only I had lasted, although in the last couple of years the village eccentric, Farmer Brian, whose farming methods had always been the subject of many a tall tale down at the Pig's Head on market day, seemed to have repented of his erstwhile unnatural ways. But the damage had already been done. I had succeeded. I was greener than the leaves on my own potato plants.







*Alien*, *Aliens* and their eponymous critters are among the most copied ideas in gaming. Now, almost ten years after the first movie was released, the boardgame appears. Leading Edge Games have clearly put a lot of time and money into this production, which has not been trouble-free: Sigourney Weaver refused to let her picture be used in the game. Maybe she'd already played it.

For your £17 you get a flimsy cardboard box, a 32-page rule book, four pages of jump-start rules, three sheets of laminated counters and some stands, a die and a full-colour poster which is meant to simulate a board. Admittedly Twentieth Century Fox will be taking a substantial cut of the profits but nevertheless one is left with the conclusion that somebody at Leading Edge Games should be shot for profiteering. This is not going to be a low-selling item.

The player or players can only play the characters from the movie: the nasties' tactics are determined by die rolls and some very dull strategies. The rules are basically simple and seem to have been scaled down from Leading Edge's normal complexity towards people who haven't played games before, but are very badly explained – there are only two examples of game situations in the whole rules booklet. In addition, the rules themselves

aren't terribly good: each turn the aliens appear, move towards the players, attack if close enough and, if successful, disappear again before the players have time to twitch. This may be close to the action in the film and might lead to good atmosphere as the players become more frustrated and paranoid, but does not do anything for good game play.

After alien action comes the characters' movements and action, which work on a point allocation system. One can move a lot, or move a bit and fire, or fire a lot and stay still. Each character has different movement and combat abilities depending both on who they are and which scenario is being played. The character sheets are nicely produced on laminated card with full colour photos. The combat system is fast and simple, and as with the film it's a lot easier for aliens to hurt characters than it is for characters to hurt aliens; even dead aliens may explode in a burst of lethal acid. Once again this is close to the film but makes for decidedly average game play.

The rule book then moves on to three scenarios, all taken from the *Aliens* film. The game is tailored around these scenarios to such an extent that the only way to write your own scenarios is to also draw your own board (the poster supplied only has the maps for the first two scenarios), write out a full turn track and playtest it a few times to make sure that the play balance is right. The first scenario involves running through a reactor room, the second is about climbing through air ducts and the third is Ripley in a robot suit against the alien queen. And that is it. The rules are so poor, and scenarios so limited that a supplement pack is almost essential. Surprise, surprise, it's already available. Designing one game and selling it in two boxes is not only a proliferating marketing trend, it also annoys the hell out of the consumer. Especially if they've just paid £17 for a game and then need to spend another £7 to make it reasonably playable. Leading Edge are clearly out to milk this one for all it's worth: some interesting game counters are found in this set but will only be explained in the expansion kit.

This is a badly designed game, badly written with a very obvious built-in obsolescence and does not begin to justify its price. I find it sad that it's on a subject popular outside gaming circles and is thus likely to put off many potential gamers before they've really had a chance to start. *Sniper! Bug Hunter* is twice the game for half the price.

James Wallis

## GROSZ JAKOSA

DESIGNED BY  
LARIO LOPF

PUBLISHED BY  
UZHORODNHYA RIKROSI

PRICE £10

RATING: 9

Well, this one really is a rarity. One of the first benefits of the changes in Eastern Europe has been a trickle, and then a flood of very playable games from the Communist Bloc. The first games to leak out were, logically, East German but now we are starting to get the full benefit of the new liberalism. This game from Hungary tackles greyhound racing (or possibly whippets, the translation is vague) which apparently, due to the lifting of the betting ban, now has a large scale following in Budapest. *Grosz Jakosa* broadly translates to 'The Big Win' and depicts a series of six races at a race meeting.

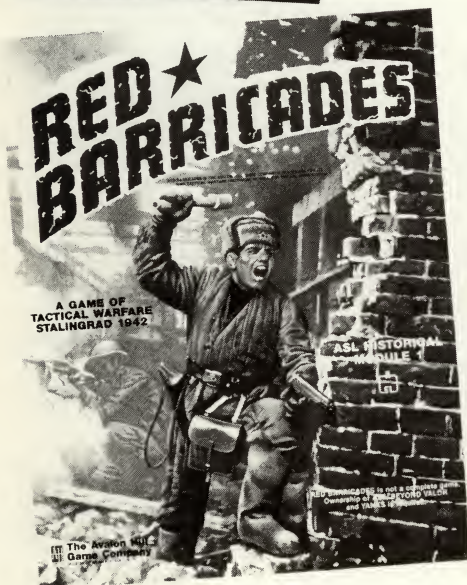
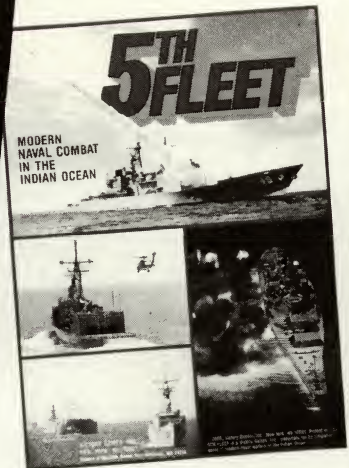
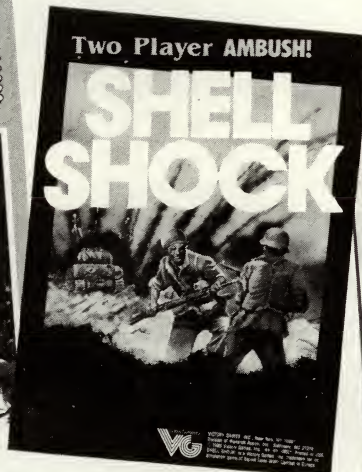
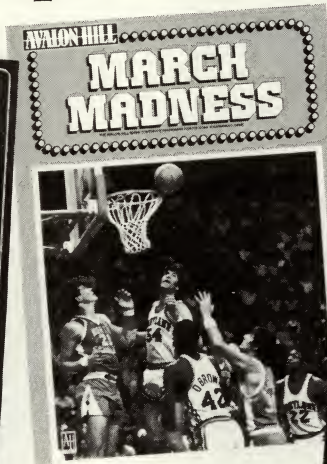
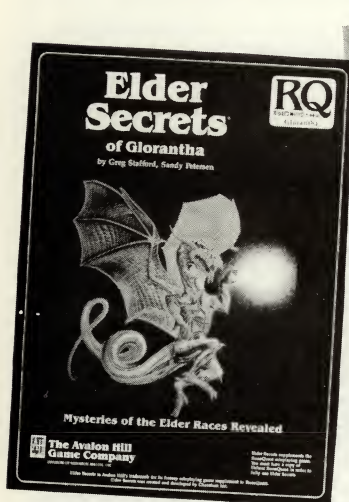
As one might expect, the big drawback of the game is the production values. We are not talking Avalon Hill standards here. The box is made from very flimsy cardboard and has some interesting artwork in the Czech animation style. The coloured board seems to be papier maché and the betting chips are made from dyed modelling clay. Aesthetically, all would be lost if the metal dogs weren't absolutely superb. According to the understandably patriotic blurb, they are made from melted down tractor bolts and are hand painted by a local worker's cooperative. The six dogs have jackets with clear numbering and rather than the boring British liveries, each coat represents the colours of the many nationalist peoples of the Balkan region. This is a simply perfect way of adding to the ethnic atmosphere of these unusual games and is just what we are looking for at our gaming group, especially if we get a chance to show them off to the public.

The rules supplied are well written and concise. It is of course a boon that the rules are also provided in English, with my Serbo-Croat not being up to much these days. The entire rules fit on one page and are very well done apart from the victory conditions which are a tad muddy. Overall though, these are state of the art and I am left to wonder if this is one of Brian Walker's flawless and timely translations? Own up Brian, we certainly owe you one here!



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Right, on to the game system which is where the game really scores. Betting is tackled in the best possible way. The idea is to run a realistic book for every race, putting appropriate prices on each dog based on a fictional form guide. This of course works fine as absolutely anyone with a brain can add up a book to make a profit and each player takes it in turn to be the 'banker' to spread the benefits.

Movement is simplicity itself. Basically, each person rolls a die and moves one dog forward by the number rolled. This is repeated for each dog but of course the challenge is knowing which dog to move first as you will have betted on some and not others. The first dog round the track wins. For those of with sharp memories, you will have noted the similarity to the excellent *Favoriten* reviewed in GI #10 and this is no bad thing. Some detractors have suggested that the German



game is way too simple but they have obviously failed to grasp the in-depth

strategies of this undoubted classic. *Grosz Jakosa* throws a bit of a curveball into this neat mechanism by cleverly adding a sixth dog. This transforms the strategy element completely and upgrades a classic system to near perfection.

I hate to get too excited about a game of such obscurity (people might consider me elitist, god forbid) but I have seldom seen such a clever system for simulating dog racing and only the ersatz production quality loses *Grosz Jakosa* that elusive hall of fame 'Ten' (or a 'Bo' as we reviewers affectionately call them). The dogs alone make this a game that every collector will want to have, if only to replace the shapeless blobs in Mattel's *Greyhounds*. Hopefully the current patchy availability (HM Customs are apparently not sure of the VAT rating for the dogs) will be solved by Just Games who will be importing this one in bulk (two copies) for around a tenner. It should be available in early April. At that price, this one's a winner.

Stan Bowles

## KARAWANE

DESIGNED BY  
BARTL, GRILL AND BERNABE

PUBLISHED BY  
RAVENSBURGER

PRICE £19.95

RATING: 4

If you can imagine building a state-of-the-art hi-fi system in order to play 78rpm records, then you get some idea of the design philosophy behind this game. What we have here is folly on a grand scale. It was one of those years in Germany when every company had to have a camel game (don't ask me why, a couple of years ago it was elephants); this is Ravensburger's. Despite the fact that these irascible animals are not known for their sprinting ability, this is a race game. The way the beasts move is as follows: each player secretly selects up a handful of McGuffins from his (finite) pile. The player with the most moves four spaces, second most three spaces, and so on. There are three stages to each race. The winner of each stage gets the most bags of silk. You can also gain or lose bags along the way by landing on particular spaces. At the end of the third race, the player with the most bags of silk is the winner. Of course there are elements of



psychology and bluff in the game. Just as there are in scissors, paper, stone.

If the game had arrived in a small box with a matching board and retailed for about a tenner then no one would have complained. Instead, it is presented as Ravensburger's 'adult' game and makes the adjective 'ostentatious' seem wholly inadequate. You do get your money's worth though: five plastic camels, 300 water jugs (the McGuffins), and 15 Ali Baba type interlocking pots in which to store the McGuffins. These delightful

components are complemented by a superb playing board. From Ravensburger, however, one has come to expect something a little more challenging at the centre, especially a game (incredibly) labelled as being suitable for the '12 and up' age group. Even this amazing claim is exceeded by the news that it took three people to come up with the game system. Twenty seconds each, presumably.

Brian Walker

Now in stock at Just Games



# CASH

DESIGNED BY  
WOLFGANG KRAMER AND  
JURGEN P K GRANAU

PUBLISHED BY  
RAVENSBURGER

PRICE £8.95

RATING: 7

This splendid little card game is, at first play, reminiscent of Sid Sackson's *Bier Borse* (aka *Bazaar*). The differences soon become clear, though. For one thing, you don't get a headache. In Sid's game you had to collect beer mats or diamonds, depending which version you played. Here you're after keys.

Seven different 'safe' cards are laid out in the centre of the table. Each card requires a particular combination of four keys to open the safe, and scores a varying amount of points for the player who succeeds in cracking it. Players are allowed to choose one key card per turn or cash (whoops) them in for a safe. For every set you trade in above one, you score ten bonus points. The optimum strategy is to

collect as many cards as possible in an effort to trade the maximum amount in one swoop. What this means is that the player who holds the biggest hand will generally win the game. This, and the lack of any interaction, are the chief problems with what is otherwise an interesting game.

The official variant offers a partial solution to one of the aforementioned problems: deal out two bonus cards to each player. Instead of collecting them after

trades, players must select an opportune time (that is, the turn before you trade) to place them under a particular safe card. The player who collects that card gets the bonus. If you still have bonus cards left at the end of the round, then you lose 10 points for each bonus card. 3-6 players, playing time 30 minutes. *Cash*? That will do nicely, thank you.

Brian Walker

(Now in stock at Just Games)

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## MIDNIGHT PARTY

DESIGNED BY  
WOLFGANG KRAMER

PUBLISHED BY  
RAVENSBURGER/  
FISHER PRICE

PRICE £7.99

RATING: 7

Nice to see the inventor's name prominently displayed on the Ravensburger box. Why do most other games companies not follow this excellent example? The name of Wolfgang Kramer will be familiar to some gamers as the creator of **Heimlich & Co**, West Germany's Game of the Year in 1986 – which has never been produced in the UK for some strange reason.

**Midnight Party** is a game for two to eight players, each of whom takes charge of some guests in a haunted house who have been invited to Hugo the Ghost's birthday party. The number of guests per player ranges from two (six to eight players) to six (two players), the total varying between 12 and 16. Far from having an enjoyable party, these people spend a harrowing time promenading round a gallery and desperately trying to escape the attentions of Hugo. The latter's great pleasure in life is to capture as many of them as he can and remove them to some steps which lead down to the wine cellar.

Movement is by means of a die on which the 3 and the 6 have been replaced by a little picture of Hugo. When a player throws a number he moves any one of his guests the corresponding amount round the gallery or, as explained later, into a room, but when a little Hugo comes up the player forfeits his move and instead advances Hugo by three spaces. While climbing from the cellar Hugo is harmless, but once he has emerged – on his third move – into the gallery his menace becomes apparent, since when he moves anybody in the path of his three spaces is captured and removed to the lowest unoccupied cellar step.

The only way for guests to escape from Hugo is by scuttling into a room. The snag here is that each room can hold only one guest and, as can be imagined, they tend to fill up quite quickly once Hugo is on the rampage.

Play proceeds with guests fleeing and scuttling where possible until none remain for Hugo to capture. Players whose guests are all either safe or sorry still have to throw the die, so Hugo's average speed of movement continues unabated until that point is reached. Scores are then totalled and the next round begins. Some consolation is at hand for the less successful, as placement of guests in the gallery goes in order of position on the cellar steps, the lowest going first and so on.

**Midnight Party** is fun, eminently suitable as a family game or a good end-of-evening game for adults. Presentation is good, with a colourful well drawn board, nicely moulded pieces representing the guests and an appropriately mischievous looking Hugo. My one quite serious niggle is the usage of two colours for guests – red and burgundy – which are

particularly hard to distinguish. As the makers have followed their usual economical practice of providing less pieces in certain colours, so reducing the amount of pieces to the minimum needed, with five or more players there is no choice – you *must* use both these colours, and very confusing it can be.

There is, of course, a lot of luck in the game but there are decisions to be made, plenty of suspense and a highly satisfactory element of doing the dirty on other players as one's guest nips into a room and blocks off a bolthole for several others waiting near the door! Not one to shake the world, but certainly recommended for some light hearted entertainment.

*George Crawshaw*



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## WORD GAMES FEATURE

# LOST For WORDS

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**John Humphries**

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Words have probably been the theme of more games than any other topic, yet still they keep coming. I sometimes question how a designer can come up with a 'new' word game. Judging from the three that have recently arrived on my desk, the answer is: with some difficulty.

## SPELLBOUNCE

**Spellbounce** is a word game based on tennis, or is it a tennis game based on words? Whichever, it ends up by being neither one nor t'other. The box contains a board, two female tennis figures, one poised to serve, the other to receive, 78 card discs each containing a letter, two ball tokens, two packs of cards, neither of which are identified in the rules, but one pack is yellow-backed and the other green. Two dice complete the contents. One is a normal numerical dice but with numbers replacing the usual spots and other has four or five letters on each face.

The board depicts a tennis court with letters along the base and side lines and the number one to six along the service court lines. Twelve blank spaces run the length of the net and there are eight line judge spaces, two on each base line and two on each side line plus a net judge space. At the beginning of the game, one yellow-backed card is placed face down on each of these nine spaces.

To start the game the server places his or her figure on a letter along his base line and a ball token on one of the three numbered spaces on the diagonally opposite service court line. The server also places a letter disc on the first space on the net. The receiving figure is placed on one of the two remaining spaces on the service court line. The server then throws both dice and the results are compared to the positions of both figures and the ball to indicate the type of serve. For example, if the dice scores are the same as the spaces where the server has placed both his figure and the ball, it is deemed an Ace. Apparently, the winner of each service also wins the game. The rules state 'ACE-Server wins game - opponent commences new game.' I'm sure that there are times when Martina, Steffi, Ivan, John et al wish that this were true in reality. Other types of serves include Net, which is rather pointless as the server has to throw both dice again without penalty, Good Serve, Fault and Normal Serve. Each determines how the receiver must play the ball. Normally they would simply place a second letter disc next to the first. On the third and subsequent strokes, before placing a letter, the player must pick up a green-backed card. These indicate the type of shot played, four of which are optional: for example, Lob, which allows the player to place his next letter on any blank space on the net. Four are mandatory, such as Net Cord, in which case the card on the Net Judge space is turned over and will either state that the shot is In or Out. Fifty per cent of the green cards are

'Dummy', and the player simply places another letter.

The object of the letters is to force your opponent to complete a word of four or more letters. The player who completes a word loses the game. The first player to win six or seven games, wins the set. Should both players win six games, a tie-break is played. Each player takes letters from a bag and the first one to complete a word of four or more letters wins.

Unfortunately, the game is almost as cumbersome to play as it is to describe. However, it is quite a good idea and if the game was cleaned up and some of the rules revised and others omitted it could be worthwhile. As it stands, who would I recommend it to? Well if you are really into tennis games with words or word games with tennis, then this is definitely for you. Otherwise, well . . .

*Spellbounce* was designed by R Perry & C McLaughlin and is published by Newgo. It retails for £12.95. Rating: 4.

## SEMANTIC

The next game is **Semantic** 'The Trivia Game of Word Meanings'. Yes, here we go again. Even the box is the same size and shape as that for TP. So when I took off the lid and discovered a board, six coloured pawns, a die and a box of question/answer cards, I was not overwhelmed by the originality. basically, this is a race game, employing the 'Increase



Your Word Power' section from the *Readers' Digest*.

The board comprises six triangular tracks, each with distinctively coloured spaces, with a scattering of Next Player and Roll Again squares. By rolls of the die players move their pawns along each triangle in turn in an anti-clockwise direction round the board. Naturally the winner is the first one to return to his or her home base. By landing on a coloured space, the player is asked a question and if the correct answer is given, that player rolls the die again and so on.

Each card contains six words, each with four possible meanings. The idea is to guess the right definition. The rules state that the words increase in difficulty between one and six. Personally I couldn't see much difference between them. If an incorrect answer is given, it is offered as a bonus to the next player. By answering correctly, he can move his pawn forward two spaces or back two spaces for a wrong answer.

The rules suggest that a 'higher level' of play can be introduced by asking players to spell the words at given points in the game such as bonuses. On the reverse of

the rule card is a travel board for anyone who gets really hooked.

There is nothing wrong with the game, and perhaps it will increase your communication skills if you can remember the answers. However, it offers nothing that is particularly original and it wins its extra mark purely on its presentation.

*Semantic was designed by F W Hann. It is published by M&K Games, price £19.95. Rating: 5.*

## QUESTIQUE

My suspicions were aroused when I saw the picture on the back of *Questique's* box. These were confirmed when I looked inside and discovered a board, a bag of plastic letter tiles and four letter racks. For some reason, it all seemed very familiar.

So how does this game differ from the other one using similar components? To start with, the board is a 22 x 22 square grid with 16 of the squares marked with stars and with four 'starting' areas. Secondly, the tiles do not contain numbers, only letters and thirdly, each player constructs their own, individual crossword

letter pattern. So there is no interaction between players. The winner is the first player to cover four stars with letter tiles. That is just about it.

In a vain attempt to make something more of this game, the rules suggest 'More Difficult Play' such as excluding certain stars from play, and 'Handicapping' by reducing the number of stars to be covered by some players.

When playing the game, we soon found that each was playing his or her own game with little regard to what the others were doing. The only times when the opponents' patterns were taken into account was on the few occasions when they were close to merging and this is strictly forbidden by the rules. As there are 484 squares on the board, this rarely happened.

Although well produced, it's difficult to recommend this game, especially when the 'original' is available at a lower price. **G**

*Questique was designed by David J English. It is published by Questique Internationale, price £14.95. Rating: 3.*

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## COLLECTOR'S CORNER

# Old bones, new bodies

*Bruce Whitehill the Big Game Hunter, rounds off his history of the American boardgame.*

After Richard Selchow sold Selchow & Righter to Coleco, that left Pressman Toy Corp as the oldest family-owned game company in the United States. J (for Jack) Pressman and Co was formed in 1922, and it became Pressman Toy Corp in 1947. Three of the games now offered by Pressman and listed in the catalogue as 'new' are: **Twenty Questions**, **Concentration** and **Lie Detector**. **Twenty Questions**, which was bought from University Games, is a variation of the early pencil and paper parlour game of that name – another example of the current popularity of boxed parlour games. **Concentration** reaches back into the 1950s, and has the distinction, like **Password**, of being in production more years than the television show on which it was based.

**Lie Detector** is a slightly updated version of Mattel's 1960s classic. Before the company closed down its game division in December 1987, Mattel had already completed the revision of its original **Lie Detector**. Many of the characters were given fresh faces (none of which were modelled after Mattel employees, as was the rumour about the earlier version). All references to smoking were eliminated – the 'ex-smokers' now sport pins instead (tie pins and lapel pins). In keeping with the times, the 'gangster' was changed into a 'racketeer'. And, possibly in keeping with Mattel's west coast environment and hopefully not a sign of things to come, the 'teacher' was replaced by a 'psychic reader'!

Also in Pressman's 1989 line is **Skittle Bowling**, a familiar skittles game of the 1800s in which solid wood bowling pins are knocked down by a ball on a string

attached to the top of a long vertical post. Incidentally, Land's End 1989 Christmas catalogue is offering an upscale beechwood version called **Bar Skittles** for \$125.

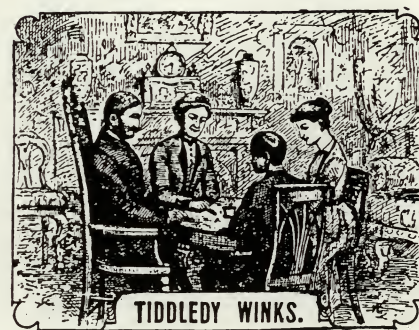
In addition, the classic **Blockhead**, as well as **Mastermind** and **Tri-Omino**es are continuing staples for Pressman. **Blockhead** was first manufactured by Saalfeld Publishing in 1954, and has the distinction of being one of the few games unchanged after thirty years and one of even fewer games still made entirely of wood.

**Mastermind**, a code-breaking game, is not unlike the game of **Jotto**, which was copyrighted in 1956 by the Jotto Corporation of New York, and produced by Selchow and Righter. The idea for **Mastermind** allegedly started in the scientific community where code games were being played using four and five digit numbers; Martin Gardner even wrote about it in his column in *Scientific American*. **Jotto**, on the other hand, used code words, whereas the **Mastermind** which emerged in 1972 from Invicta consisted of coloured pegs.

**Tri-Omino**es, a three-sided domino tile game, was brought to market in its present form in 1968. It is the same as the game of **Contack**, produced in 1939 by Volume Sprayer Manufacturing of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and later sold to Parker Brothers. Incidentally, the original **Contack** came in a hexagonal, tin-lined box with pressed wood pieces.

And, as always, Pressman has the full complement of traditional games which were first played in the 1800s or even earlier: the ancient strategy games of backgammon, checkers, chess, Chinese checkers, cribbage and dominoes, and the children's games of hopscotch, jacks, and ring toss, as well as **Bingo** (which used to

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be called **Lotto**), **Pick Up Sticks** (which was called **Jack Straws**), **Tiddly Winks** (often seen as 'Tiddley' or 'Tiddledy' Winks), **Tic Tac Toe** (originally **Tit Tat Toe**), **Pin The Tail On The Donkey** and **Snakes and Ladders**.

Pressman is also offering a less well known game, called **Wa-Hoo**. According to the box description, it is 'an exciting chase and race game from the folklore of the great southwest.' **Wa-Hoo** is a rebirth of a Parcheesi-like marble game of the identical name which was put out by two companies in the 1950s. One of them was Creative Designs of Gatesville, Texas. The other company, judging by its name, may have been responsible for the origin of **Wa-Hoo** in 1953 – it was the Wa Hoo Sales Company of Pontiac, Michigan.

The Avalon Hill Game Company continues to manufacture a number of popular games which have been on the market from eighteen to thirty-five years. **Diplo-**



macy is one of only two territorial war strategy games to become popular with at least a portion of the general public (Parker Brothers' *Risk* is the other). It was copyrighted in 1959 by Games Research, Inc, then sold to 3M. It's not a game for *all* the public since, in addition to requiring strategy, it demands negotiation and deception. According to the May 1973 issue of *Games & Puzzles* magazine, it was (and maybe still is) Dr Henry Kissinger's favourite game.

Avalon Hill's *Bali* began in 1954. This word game using two decks of letter cards was introduced by I-S Ultd and then sold to Selchow & Righter. At one time it was to card games what *Scrabble* is to board games.

Another Avalon Hill classic is *Twixt*, invented by Alexander Randolph for 3M in 1963. This two-player strategy game is based on the knight's move in chess, and requires a player to build a wall from one side of the board to the other before an opponent connects the other two sides.

Two of Avalon Hill's games, *Acquire* and *Sleuth*, were conceived by Sid Sackson (a prolific inventor who was also kind enough to provide the dates of origin of some of the games mentioned in this series). He invented *Acquire* in 1962 for 3M, the company that eventually sold out to Avalon Hill. Collectors should note that the first, limited edition, test-market version of *Acquire* had a folding board and a larger box than the final version manufactured in 1963. In 1967, Mr Sackson developed *The Case of the Elusive Assassin*, an Ellery Queen mystery game, for Ideal. Later the boardgame underwent a revision, including the elimination of the game board, and, in 1971, *Elusive Assassin* became the exceptional deductive-reasoning card game published by 3M as *Sleuth*.

A lot of smaller game companies (and toy companies with only a limited number of games) are producing their own classics, or reintroducing old favourites, sometimes dressed-up as new.

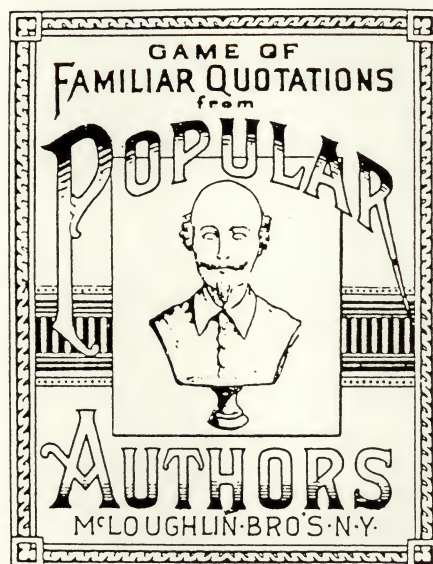
Brio, a Scandinavian company with a subsidiary in Wisconsin, is still making *Labyrinth*, the maze-in-a-box game. 'Brio' stands for 'Brothers Ivarsson of Osby', and was established in 1884 in Osby, Sweden. *Labyrinth*, which has two knobs used to control the horizontal and vertical tilt of a maze board, was invented by a young Swede in the early 1940s, manufactured in 1946, and introduced to US markets around 1950 by FAO Schwarz and Abercrombie & Fitch. According to Brio, over three million La-

byrith games are sold annually worldwide, and the game 'has been found useful in rehabilitating shell-shocked war veterans.' A spokesperson for Brio has said that over the years many companies in the US and abroad have copied their game of *Labyrinth*.

A possible example of that may be found in the current catalogue for Pressman. The catalogue pictures a game resembling *Labyrinth*, called *Tournament Labyrinth*. Strangely enough, it may even be closer to the original than the current Brio model! The Brio base has been changed to plastic – Brio contends that plastic does not warp like wood, and provides a more even surface, which makes the ball-rolling game better. Pressman's game is all wood, just like the 1940s model.

Another company, Northwest Corner, in addition to offering *The Captain's Mistress* (mentioned in GI #11 as the original *Connect Four*), also is selling the game of *Senet*. *Senet*, sometimes called *Senat*, was one of the games found in King Tut's tomb. It was reintroduced by Parker Brothers in 1946, and has been manufactured by numerous companies since then.

US Games Systems could be the only US company that still makes *Authors*, one of the earliest and most popular card games in the United States and Europe. Though *Authors* is one of the most common games, people still collect it because it's fun to play, and because different editions feature different authors. The current version offers Mark Twain on the aces, plus Dickens, Thackeray, Stevenson, Shakespeare, Cooper, Irving, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Scott, Tennyson, Alcott and Poe.



Popular Authors: McLoughlin, ca 1887

International Games, a company born and fed on the success of its card game *Uno*, has brought back *Old Maid*, 'dressed up for today's kids'. One of the company's new games for 1989 was *Hear Say*, the object of which is to 'try to remember and repeat tongue twisting phrases to get the most points.' Hello! Sounds like the old parlour game of Telephone. As I have already mentioned, many companies are packaging versions of games (like Charades and the Dictionary Game) which have been popular pen and paper and parlour amusements for decades.

Finally, there's a game out advertised as 'the first economics and investment game that is both educational and great fun to play.' It is called *Bulls and Bears*. But we're not talking about the 1896 *Bulls and Bears*, *The Great Wall Street Game* by McLoughlin Bros, nor the more popular 1936 *Bulls and Bears* invented by Monopoly maven Charles Darrow. The quotation comes from a press release for the new *Bulls and Bears* game from Mario Fischel Toys & Games, a German company with a branch in Los Angeles. In this case, the game is new (we assume) – only the name has that air of familiarity about it. Incidentally, the 1896 McLoughlin catalogue had this to say about *its Bulls and Bears*: 'Based upon the customary operations of the stock market. The rapidly shifting fortunes of those who dabble in stocks, have been woven into a single game, that for the time being will make players feel like speculators, bankers and brokers.'

An industry that produces much speculation and makes a lot of dollars but not always a lot of sense, the toy and game industry introduces hundreds of new games annually, most of which are gone and forgotten within a few years. It's nice to know that so many of the classic early games are still around. And we wait with great anticipation to see what wonderful, old, great games are made 'new' again next year. GI

## About the author

Bruce Whitehill is one of the world's leading authorities on American games. Known also as 'The Big Game Hunter', he has the largest diversified collection of antique American games in the world – over 350 US game companies represented from 1840 to 1960. He is currently working on a book on the history of American games.



# RISK

The World Conquest Game



## THE HISTORY

### Phil Orbanes

*Risk* was created in the mid 1950s by a French film producer named Albert Lamorisse, best known for the film *The Red Balloon*. The game was first published in France under the title *La Conquete Du Monde* in 1957.

Parker executives liked the game, but were troubled by two aspects of it. First, the war theme/title were too obvious for the American market at the time. Second, the game relied on too much luck in its distribution of territories at the game's start and took too long to play. From August 1957 until December 1958 Parker's staff worked to correct these, finally publishing the game in 1959. It was immediately successful and has sold over six million copies in the United States alone since then.

Parker solved the 'luck' problem by giving players the chance to select and fortify territories at the game's start (while offering, as an option, the French technique of dealing out cards and acquiring the territories pictured thereon). The escalating replacement army rule served to bring the game to a climactic finish in far

less time than it originally took. The game is still a long game, however.

Parker changed the game's theme to 'the continental game' to avoid using 'war' or 'conquest' on the box cover. However, by the 1970s Parker updated its packaging and stopped beating around the bush – 'The game of world conquest' was adopted as its theme and remains to this day.

The name *Risk* has a cute story associated with it. Parker wanted a 'mass-market' name without an overt military theme. Hundreds were suggested. The setting for the game was also tampered with – one being planets in outer space (thank goodness that one wasn't adopted. Who could relate to that?). Finally, one day, one of the company's 'Seven Dwarfs' – the nickname given to its seven member sales force – walked into the president's office and said: 'I think I have the name.' He placed a sheet of paper on the president's desk. It contained four capital letters: R I S K. In no time, the company adopted it.

When asked how he came up with the name, the salesman said, simply: 'R I S and K are the initials of my grandchildren's first names. I was fooling around with them the other night. It just came up.'





# THE VARIANTS

## Lew Pulsipher

Although it is sneered at in some quarters, Parker Brothers' **Risk** is an old favourite among occasional game players, and even serious wargamers indulge in it. This article describes some simple variations on the basic system which yield new games with the flavour of the original. Many variants can be combined with one another, but be wary, for some combinations could result in dull, stalemated games. Much depends on how many are playing.

One of the defects of **Risk** is the strong element of luck. The dice-rolling is tolerable, but the escalating influence of the cards is overwhelming when a player can get 30, 35, 40 and more armies for one set. To correct this, armies for card sets must be given in a 4-6-8-4-6-8 repeating cycle rather than the standard escalating pattern. This allows some strategy in deciding when to hand in cards, but won't let the game turn into a card party. The variants below assume use of this variation, though in some cases it won't matter which method is used.

In some of the variants below, a territory may become vacant. In such a case a player with armies in an adjacent territory may occupy it on his turn just as though he had attacked it with one army.

### Unlimited free moves

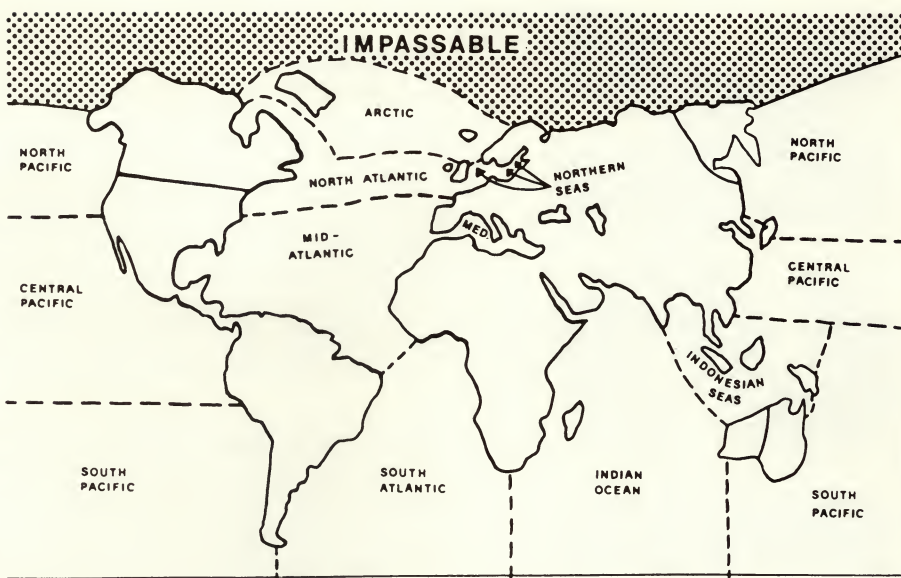
At the end of his turn a player may make any number of free moves. This encourages a more adventurous policy because armies can be moved around to plug gaps left by unsuccessful attacks.

### Retreats

Rather than fight, all but one of a defender's armies may withdraw to an adjacent territory occupied by that player. More than one army may be left behind if desired. The decision to retreat must be taken before the attacker announces his first attack, which must be executed whether the defender withdraws or not.

### Armed neutrals

Give each player the same number of territories initially, leaving twelve (or, for four players, ten) unused. Each of these is an armed neutral country, beginning with 1-6 armies (roll a die) which defend with two dice against any attack (whenever possible), attacker rolling both sets of



dice. Each round a neutral survives, add one to its armies.

### Capitals

When using either set-up method, choice or random (card), after all armies are placed each player names one space as his capital. The choices are written and revealed simultaneously. A player receives an extra army in each capital territory he owns at the start of his turn.

The effect, of course, is to give players positional targets other than continents. This rule may be used in conjunction with the supply rule below. A further variation is that a player wins when he owns all the capitals, or for a shorter game, when he owns two-thirds of all capitals.

### Supplies

Players name supply base territories after set-up in the same way they name capitals. If the capitals rule is used, it is a supply base. Each player receives one base per ten armies allotted to him at the start.

Beginning with the second round, at the end of his turn any of a player's armies which cannot trace a supply line to a supply base he owns are eliminated. A supply line is a contiguous line of adjacent territories occupied by the player, from a supply base to the territory being supplied. (Territories connected by double lines are adjacent, of course.) A player may at any time destroy a supply base in any territory he occupies. This variation is more interesting when the random set-up is used since it forces players to spread about.

### Sea spaces

Ignore the double lines connecting land territories across sea. The only way armies may travel or attack across water is through the agency of fleets in the sea space(s) separating the two territories (convoy). Players may devise their own sea space configuration; a suggestion is shown above. No more armies may free move or attack than there are convoying fleets in each of the connecting spaces – if only one fleet is in one of them, say, only one army may attack; when it is eliminated, no more may attack through that sea space in that turn. Fleets are placed in any sea space the player owns; a new unit may be either an army or a fleet. If a player owns no sea spaces, he may place new fleets in one (and only one) sea space adjacent to a land space he owns, treating this as an attack on that space. If used in conjunction with the capitals rule, new pieces coming onto the board at a capital may be called fleets and attack adjacent sea space(s). At the end of the turn they must be in a sea space(s) or they are destroyed.

Sea spaces are counted for gaining new units by ownership of territory, but a player must capture a land territory in order to receive a card at the end of his turn. Fleets and armies cannot fight each other. Fleets of one player may convoy attacks of another player's armies.

### Overcrowding

A territory may hold only a specified number of armies, say ten, no more. This prevents a player from holing up in South America or Australia until he has dozens of armies with which to sweep through vast areas. The effect is greater if the limit



# RISK

The World Conquest Game

is smaller, say 5 or 6. In this case players must go for multiple attacking positions.

## Recruiting

A player may place no more than one new army in any of his territories in his turn. Extra armies, if any, are lost.

## Twin Earths

This is for *Risk* gluttons only. Use two boards and one-and-a-half times as many armies initially. Each territory on one board is connected with the territory of the same name on the other, but to no other territory on the other board. This makes continents hard to hold, of course, since a continent on one board can be invaded from the same continent on the other board.

## Leaders

Five armies in a space at the beginning of a turn may be replaced by a leader (a half penny coin is a good token, if you've still got any). When a leader is present in a space, armies therein add one to their dice rolls in attack or defence (a roll of 7 is possible). The leader otherwise acts as a normal army. No more than one pip may be added to any dice roll, regardless of the number of leaders present.

## Paratroops

Two normal armies may be replaced before any attacks are made by one paratroop army. Paratroop armies act like normal armies except that they may attack a territory two territories away, jumping over the intervening territory. A free move may also be over two territories' distance. Once they begin an attack paratroop armies must fight until they capture the space or are eliminated.

## Effects on a single territory

At the end of each round, each player secretly writes how many of his armies he will remove in return for the power to name the territory which will be affected by one of the anomalies listed below. (Decide before the game begins which will be used.) When offers are revealed the one declaring the highest total must remove that number of armies and name the territory. If there is a draw, the player moving later in the round wins.

Effects are as follows:

**Black Hole.** The territory and all armies in it are eliminated. Effectively, it becomes ocean with no connecting double lines across it. A continent must include all of its original spaces to be worth additional armies to the owner.

**Plague.** Roll a die for each army (or group of armies if the total is very high). On an even roll the armies die of the plague. The plague 'spreads', moving randomly to an adjacent territory at the end of the next round and affecting armies in it in the same manner. Thereafter it dissipates.

**Revolution.** Half the armies in the territory (round up) revolt against the owner and join the player who designates the territory. That player must immediately use the revolting armies to attack the remaining 'loyal' armies until one side or the other is eliminated. A territory in a continent owned entirely by one player may not be selected in the case.

This rule may discourage the 'stockpile' strategy, since effects are proportionate to the number of armies in the designated territory. If desired, several players may combine their army offers in order to 'outbid' a single larger adversary – the territory to be designated must be designated along with the offer. **G**

*This article originally appeared in Games & Puzzles, and is reprinted with permission.*

# CASTLE RISK

**Brian Walker**

Although this variation was published in continental Europe and the US, it was never given the benefit of a UK release.

One of the main differences between it, and standard *Risk*, are the victory conditions which offer a somewhat more challenging game: at the start of play, each player selects a territory to be his 'headquarters'. This should be announced after all the initial armies and reinforcements have been placed – these should be chosen, not dealt randomly. The players are then given the matching territory cards which should be placed face up on the table.

The game is won when one player occupies a pre determined number of headquarters in addition to still occupying his own. For a game of average length I would suggest four HQ including the home base. You can use the fixed trades with this variant, or simply up the armies you get each turn by one, but no more.

Normal *Risk* rules otherwise apply. **G**

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Is nothing sacred? Gaming purists might well ask this following the release of this conversion of the well known board game. The answer to such an enquiry should be an emphatic no, and on this evidence you can throw in a 'thank goodness'. Like most such offerings, the chief advantage here is the solitaire option – ideal for honing your tournament skills, or ensuring that you don't suffer an early

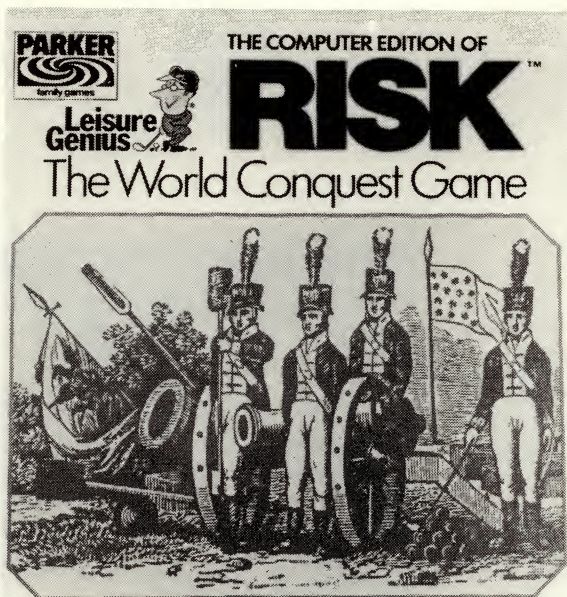


don't suffer an early bath in your more casual attempts at word domination.

As with most ST games, *Risk* uses a mouse interface with a click-on to place armies in the standard manner. The map is brightly coloured but, strangely, continents are not delineated. Quite an incredible omission considering this is a game all about capturing and holding continents. To scroll around the world you simply run the mouse off the edge of it, rather than using cumbersome GEM bars. The starting set-up, via pull down menus, offers a fascinating list of options. Even the victory conditions from *Castle Risk* are included. You can also arrange the card trade-ins exactly how you want; by set type and/or decreasing the armies you get for such a trade. The number of armies allowed per territory can be fixed also.

### BIT PLAYERS

Okay, you've got more options than a Wall Street trading house, but what of your 16-bit opponents? They can operate in three modes: easy, normal, and good. In reality, they operate in one mode: bad. For 'good' you can read 'psychopathic'. They simply attack everything that doesn't move, especially if it's human.



The usual problem, I'm afraid, of creating an artificial intelligence that can play well without cheating. Not that there is any sign of real cheating here, but neither is there any sign of playing well. This is especially evident in what is potentially the best way to play *Risk*: the 'Headquarters' option. In this version you have to designate one of your territories as your HQ. The winner is the player who captures a predetermined number (four is

quer 24 territories mission' you'll get stuffed.

Despite these reservations the game does provide good entertainment whether you are new to the game or not. It will never replace the boardgame, nor can it be considered an essential purchase. Nevertheless, it's nice to have it around.

Brian Walker

# SEMANTIC T.M.

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- (2) arbitrary (ah-bi-tru-ree) - A: optional. B: not bound by rules. C: unimpeded. D: permitted by authority.
- (3) lickety-split - A: light-heartedly. B: immediately. C: daintily. D: energetically.
- (4) truncate (trunk-ayt) - A: to communicate ideas. B: to stretch, elongate. C: to make a long distance telephone call. D: to cut short.
- (5) gurdyloo - A: a garden produce. B: a warning cry. C: an old board-game. D: a toilet attendant.
- (6) triskaidekaphobia (tri-sky-dek-u-fobhiu) - A: superstition. B: fear of the unknown. C: fear of long words. D: fear of the number thirteen.

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## Derek Carver

I wonder how many remember this game with its tasteless subtitle. Devised by some of the old *Games & Puzzles* test panel it was originally published by Philmar in 1974.

Readers who had started their games collecting 16 years ago perhaps shared my own reluctance to pay just under £3(!) for a box containing 24 pieces of thin card and a few badly moulded *Diplomacy* bits. Not even a board, would you believe! Those were the days before I learned that like swallows and summer, a lot of splendid bits don't necessarily make a good game.

Anyway, don't despair. Once I realised what a wonderful game I'd missed – by then no longer obtainable – I set about making my own copy. You can easily do the same. If you take some trouble over it it will take you all of 20 minutes and, what is more, you will end up with a better version than the published one. The published game was limited by lack of components to four players, but by making your own you can make it for as many players as you like – it certainly doesn't suffer by being played by up to six (and probably more, although I haven't done so).

Although this RIP series normally merely outline the rules of these out of print games, out of consideration for those readers wishing to make it for themselves I'll this time give the rules in detail.

As supplied, it comprised sets of six hexagons for each player. It's not easy to make your own hexagons but this is quiet unnecessary. You can make rectangles the



size of playing cards. When placed down on the table adjacent cards must be placed like bricks building a wall (that is, each second row must be placed half a card to the right or left of the preceding row). In this way each card could, in a full pattern, make contact with six other cards, just like a hexagonal arrangement.

### Equipment

Each player is represented by six cards (rectangles or hexagons) identified with his colour. Because the colours are identified by their initial letter when writing his 'Orders' in the game you must select colours that have different initial letters. Cards in each set are numbered 3, 4, 5, 5A, 6 and 7 respectively and when making your own copy it is best to write these numbers in the corner of the cards so that they are always visible during play.

Each player also has eight control markers in his colour and three sheets of paper and a pen.

Additionally there are attack missiles and defence missiles. These do not have to be in the players' colours so need only be differentiated from each other by colour or shape. So it means robbing some other game – in the original these were *Diplomacy*-type components.

### Preparation

All players hand their set of cards to the game leader who shuffles them and places them in a pile face down. He then takes the top card, which represents a single 'country', and places it face up in front of the player whose colour it is.

The next player does the same. In placing the card it must touch any card already in place, thus forming a 'continent'. There is no rule governing the actual shape – the cards could form a solid block or, at the other extreme, be in a straight line – so each continent will be different.

Each player takes control of two countries – the '5A' in front of him and the '4'

# CONFRONTATION

## THE NUCLEAR WAR GAME



in the continent to his left. He does this by placing his control marker plus two attack and two defence markers in each.

## The game

Each turn comprises:

1. Writing three sets of attack orders by each player.
2. Reading out the orders and following their instructions (if possible).
3. Building.

## Attacks

Each player writes three attacks using a separate sheet of paper (on which he must write his name) for each. When all have written, the leader of the current turn takes his first attack sheet and places it face down on the table. The second player then places his first attack face down on top of it, and so on round the table. Once all of the first attacks have been put onto the pile the second attacks are placed likewise and then the third attacks. A player does not have to attack in any of the three phases; he can merely place a blank sheet.

To write an attack each player selects a target country (only one target for each separate attack). Missiles are launched from as many countries under his control as the attacking player chooses. The attack value of each missile is *equivalent to the value of the country from which it is launched*. An example of an attack as given in the rules is:

B7(14) + RA(5) = 19 Target R3

This states that two missiles will be fired from Blue 7 ( $2 \times 7 = 14$ ) and one from Red 5A making an attack value of 19 points.

The target is to be Red 3. Players could agree on other ways of writing the instructions and even draw up forms but the important thing is that the instructions must be clear. If they are not they are not carried out – it's as simple as that!

A player does not have to launch *all* of his attack missiles in a country in any one attack. He can launch part of his force in attack #1, for example, and another part in attack #3. Sometimes he might choose to use just a few attack missiles in one turn and keep the rest for another turn. He is free to do as he chooses.

**Note:** Only unoccupied countries may be attacked during the first turn of play.

When all attack instructions have been placed on the pile, the pile is turned and the game leader reads them out one by one, starting with the top one (which is his own first attack). Each attack is resolved as it is read out.

Having read out the attack (let us assume it is the one given as an example above) any player owning the attacked country can choose to fire off defence missiles. The number to be fired is decided upon after the attack is announced. As with attack missiles the value of a defence missile is equal to the number of the country from which it is fired. If a player controls one or more countries adjacent to the attacked country the missiles in these countries can also be brought in to the defence according to the following rules:

- a. Defence missiles launched from adjacent allied countries assume the value of the *attacked* country.
- b. The number launched from any one allied country may not exceed the number launched from the country under attack.

c. The country under attack must have launched all of its defence missiles before it can bring in defence missiles from allied neighbours.

From the above it can be seen that there is an advantage in building up a small empire of countries with shared frontiers.

## Resolution of attacks

The game leader removes the attack missiles as stated on the attack instructions and returns them to the pool. The defender removes all missiles that he decides to use in defence and these are returned to the pool.

An attack is successful if the total *point* value of attack missiles exceeds the total *point* value of defence missiles plus the total *number* (not point value) of either type of missile remaining on the ground after the attack\*. In this event the attacker takes control of the country and places one of his markers on it. Missiles remaining on the ground are removed to the pool.

An attack is unsuccessful if:

- a. The value of defence missiles launched equals or exceeds the attack value.
- b. The attack value exceeds the launched defence missile value but by insufficient difference to exceed the number of missiles remaining on the ground\*. In this case unlaunched missiles are removed from play so that the attack and defence totals are equal but the defender is still in control.

Every country has a basic defence strength of the value printed on it – equivalent to the value of one defence missile, in other words. This is the figure that has to be exceeded if a country (owned or unowned) without defence missiles is attacked. It is only the *second* missile that is placed in a country that increases this figure.

If as a result of an attack the total value of attacking missiles exceeds the defence missiles plus the number of ground missiles by 10 or more the attack is an 'overkill' and the attacked country is eliminated and totally removed from play. In this way continents break into pieces and remain so broken. **Note:** No country may be overkilled unless all defence missiles have been launched from that country.

Because of the manner in which an attack period is conducted certain anomalous position frequently occur:





# CONFRONTATION

## THE NUCLEAR WAR GAME

a. It is often impossible to meet an attacking instruction in full because some of the missiles to be used in the attack have already been destroyed by another player's attack earlier in the game. This is a major aspect of play. In this case as much of the attack instructions as possible must be carried out. In writing instructions players often allow – especially in their later attacks – for this possibility and make over-provision. This is OK if they have guessed correctly but it can result in an unwanted overkill if they made unnecessary overprovision!

b. Often a player has totally lost control of a country he intended to launch an attack from. This country's contribution to the attack is, therefore, zero.

c. Players can launch attacks against their own countries. This is done in, say, the third attack phase if they assume an opponent is going to attack and capture that country in an earlier phase. But if they are wrong they must carry through the attack against their own country according to the normal rules.

### Build period

Each player takes from the pool three missiles for each country controlled by him at the end of an attack period. These must be placed three in each country under his control in such a mix that the total ratio of one type of missile to another does not exceed 2:1. where this is not possible (due to use or destruction of missiles in the previous turn) he must meet this ratio as near as possible.

Verbal or written alliances between players is not permitted.

### The winner

The winner is the player controlling eight countries at the end of an attack phase or 50% of those remaining, whichever is the less.

\*On my rules I see a handwritten note. I don't know where I got this note from – maybe it was a rule that was suggested in *Games & Puzzles* but it is one we play to

and it says: 'Attack missiles cannot be counted towards a defence total unless *all* defence missiles have been fired.'

### PLAYING THE GAME

Whether or not you've read and digested all of the above, if I give a short run down of a turn you'll get some idea how nail-biting this game is. Firstly it must be appreciated that although there are six countries forming one continent in your colour this is not *your* continent as such. Its only connection with you is that it is plonked on to the table in front of you. Certainly one of your starting countries is in it but you also have one in the country in front of the player sitting next to you, and as the game progresses you are likely to own countries in front of other players, too. In fact, countries need not be given colours at all. They could be designated A, B, C and so on.

Certain aims are rather desirable. To own countries next to one another is advantageous from the defence point of view as stated above. Also to own countries with a high rating is preferable to owning countries with a low rating as these latter need a lot of defence missiles and the rules do not allow you to build missiles greatly in excess of attack missiles.


So with the above aims in view – plus trying to prevent opponents from achieving their aims in this direction – you write your orders. It might seem clear a lot of the time what you want to do in your turn (for example, to attack a certain country to capture it, or to attack another player to prevent *him* from attacking *you*) but the big question is *the order in which you do these things*. It seems desirable to attack a country early in the turn because to delay might mean that the mixed force you wish to use in the attack might have suffered from attacks by other players and, therefore, not all be available. But to attack too early could also mean that another player, sensing what you will do, will wait until the third attack to have a go at you in your newly acquired country. Being much reduced in defence he could gain it at far less cost than if he had not allowed you to do all the dirty work ear-

lier in the turn. Similarly you might hope to delay to take advantage of another player's efforts in a similar way. There are many additional considerations, all too numerous to list here, as you will realise.

The overkill is a major tactic. If you build yourself a tight empire players will try to break it asunder by overkill (easier on a long thin continent than on a bulky one). This can be achieved in one attack but more often it takes place over a series of attacks in the same turn. Firstly you might suffer an attack by one player in the first attack phase. This you successfully defend against. You might launch some of your attack missiles in your turn. But then you suffer further attacks either from the same player or from others. It is not too difficult to exceed your reduced defence factor by 10, and your country goes up in a puff of smoke.

Taking advantage of your position in the round and writing your orders in the correct sequence (while outguessing your opponents) is the secret of success in this game.

I have known games of **Confrontation** finish at the end of turn three. This is normally as a result of players leaving it to others to take the necessary preventative action. By the beginning of the turn one player might have five areas under his control. It is clear to all that he is capable of winning that turn. But each leaves it to the others to do something about it while he himself gets on with his own thing. The inevitable then happens. But normally, of course, games go on much longer than this with countries slowly disappearing as a result of overkill.

I suppose there must be a number still about that should show up in jumble sales and the like from time to time, but I've never seen one. Interestingly enough, a whole lot must have been shipped to France because for years after it was unobtainable in this country you could buy it in Paris – especially in the Les Halles Games Shop, I remember. It would never surprise me if they don't still have their slowly reducing pile of copies! 



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## DO IT YOURSELF

## COMBINATION

*Solitaire games requiring skilful planning and play are rare. Here*

*Sid Sackson presents a simple but sophisticated alternative to patience.*

**Combination** is played with a 40 card deck formed by removing the pictures from a standard deck. After shuffling, deal out 16 face up cards in a 4 x 4 array as shown. (The column and row designations are there to help with the explanation.)

You are now left with 24 cards and the object is to play all of these to the layout. Hold the deck in one hand, face up so that the card on top is exposed. This is the first card to be played, followed by the one below, and so on. You are always permitted to look at the cards that will be coming next. (In fact if you want to have any chance of winning you will have to look, and plan, well ahead.) But you may never change the order of the cards, with the following exception.

If at the start of the game the exposed card cannot possibly be played to the layout, it is placed on the bottom of the deck exposing the following card. Once a card has been played to the layout, however, all the remaining cards must be played in order.

A card can be played to one of the 16 positions in the layout provided it is placed immediately next, and in the same straight line either horizontally or vertically but not diagonally, to two adjacent cards that add up to the number, or ten more than the number, on the card being played. (Incidentally, and Ace is a 1 and suit has no significance.) In placing a card it can cover any number except the same number as the card itself.

Let's take some examples to clarify the foregoing. If the layout is as shown in the illustration and the first card to be played

is a 6, it could go on space Bb (next to the 4 and 2 on spaces Bc and Bd) or on space Bd (next to the 10 and 6 on spaces Cd and Dd).

If the first card is a 3 it could be played to space Ba or Bd (next to the 9 and 4 on spaces Bb and Bc), on space Ca (next to the 8 and 5 on spaces Aa and Ba), or on space Cb (next to the 3 and 10 on spaces Cc and Cd). It could not be played on space Cc (next to the 9 and 4 on spaces Ac and Bc) because this space is already occupied by a 3.

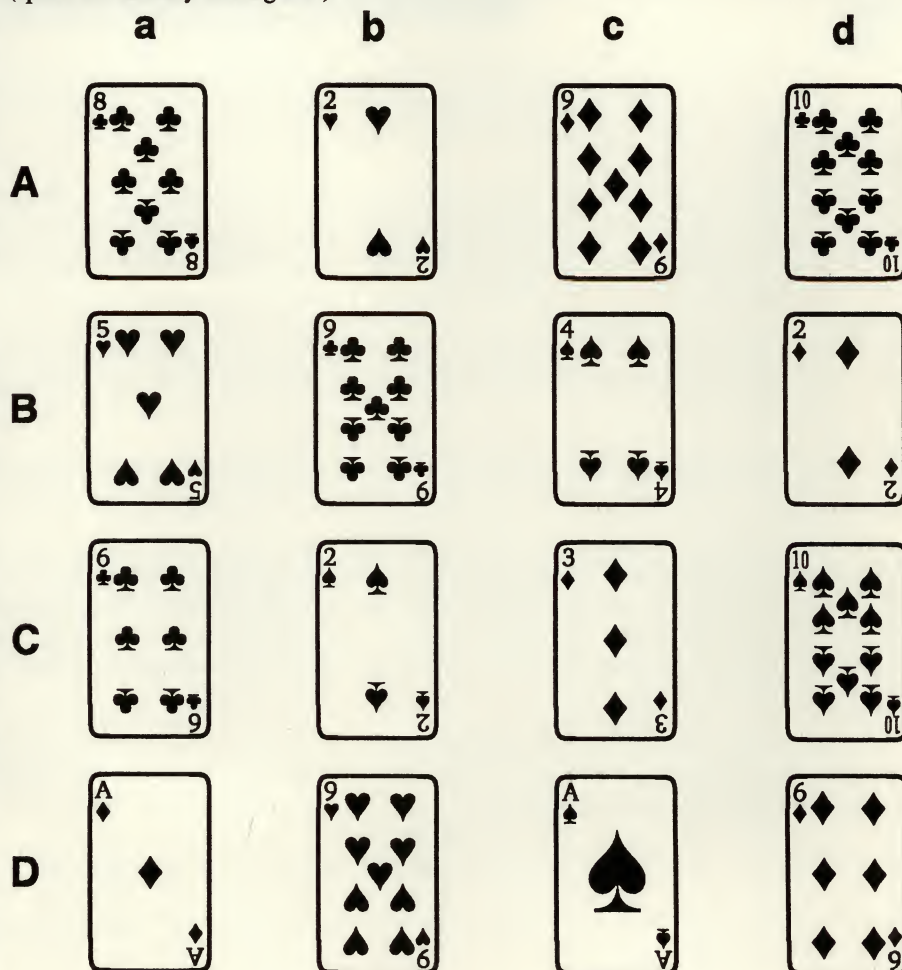
To show some of the thinking used in the game let's look at the first five cards to be played onto the illustrated layout: 3, 4, 10, 4, 8. Two 4s are to be placed and at the start there are no spaces available for a 4 (space Bc already having a 4.)

Placing the 3 on space Ca creates an opening for a 4 on space Ac. Space Cc can now receive the 4 which follows, and the 8 can be placed on space Cc.

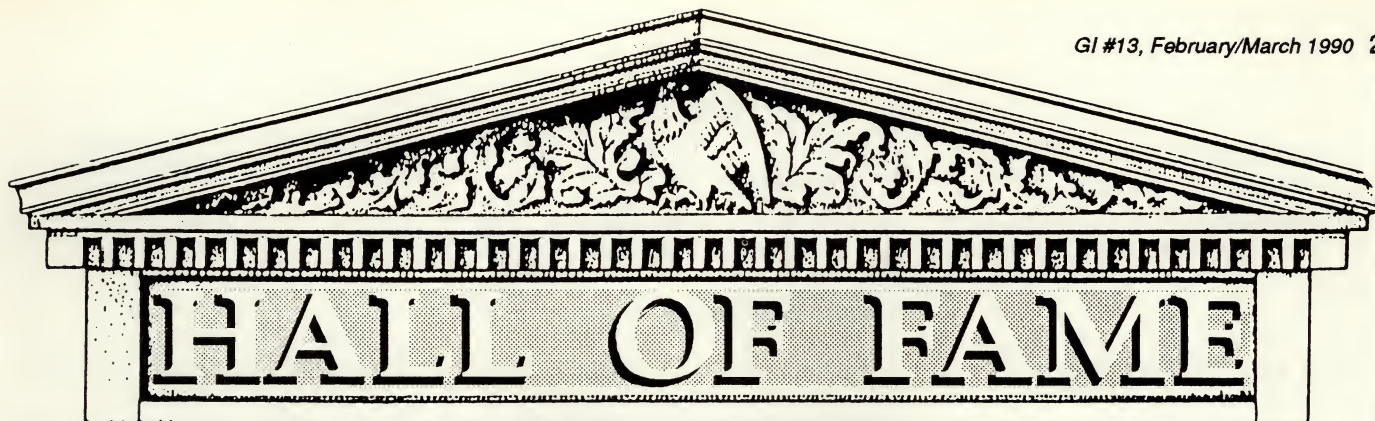
This example, of course, is quite elementary. The possible combinations become almost infinite as all 24 cards are considered.

**Combination** can be played as a competitive game by providing a deck for each player. One deck is shuffled and then all of the others are arranged in the same order. Each player plays by himself and the one who is able to place the most cards is the winner. G

Copyright © Sid Sackson. We will be printing another game by Sid next issue.







Compiled by the staff and contributors of *Games International*.

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Acquire (Avalon Hill)  
 Civilization (Gibsons/Avalon Hill)  
 Die Macher (Hans im Gluck)  
 Dune (Avalon Hill)  
 Football Strategy (Avalon Hill)  
 Junta (West End)  
 Liar's Dice (MB)  
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 Railway Rivals (Rostherne)  
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## Wargames

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 Empires of the Middle Ages (SPI)  
 Flat Top (Avalon Hill)  
 Flight of the Goeben (SPI)  
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 La Bataille series (Marshal)  
 1914 (Avalon Hill)

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## Computer Games

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 Elite (Acomsoft)  
 F19 Stealth Fighter (Microprose)  
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 Hardball II (Accolade)  
 Interceptor (Intellisoft)  
 Leaderboard (Access Software)  
 M.U.L.E (Electronic Arts)  
 NFL Challenge (Data East)  
 Romance of the Three Kingdoms (Koei Corp)  
 Sim City (Maxis)  
 Ultima (Origin)  
 Zork (Infocom)



## Texas dangers

In a bizarre real life enactment of their game **Illuminati**, Steve Jackson Games of Austin, Texas, was raided by the FBI and Secret Service on the morning of February 28th. After busting down the doors *securitate* style, the Feds closed down the **Illuminati** BBS network, though at the time of writing it is still functioning on read only.

Chief editor at SJG Loyd Blankenship had his collar felt and is currently out on bail, though it should be stressed that he has not been formally charged with anything. Meanwhile SJG are still functioning as normally as they ever did (?). For those of you with access to a net you can call the BBS (on 1200 baud or less) for the latest update.

At press time the following message was being displayed over the net: 'You may have noticed that our corporate mascot, who usually greets our callers with a cheerful smile, is frowning today. I think you'll agree he has every right to. Before the start of work on March 1, Steve Jackson Games was visited by agents of the United States Secret Service. They searched the buildings thoroughly, tore open several boxes in the warehouse, broke a few locks, damaged a couple of filing cabinets (which we would gladly have let them examine had they let us in the building), answered the phone discourteously, probably ate a few of the orange slices that were on the Fearless Leaders desk, and confiscated some computer equipment including the computer that BBS was running on at the time'.

'So far we have not received a clear explanation of what the Secret Service was looking for, what they expected to find, or much of anything else. We are fairly certain that Steve Jackson Games is not the target of whatever investigation is being conducted; in any case, we have done nothing illegal and have nothing whatsoever to hide. However, the equipment that was seized is apparently considered to be evidence in whatever they're investigating, so we aren't likely to get it back any time soon. It could be a month, it could be never.' Many thanks to our source 'Deep Fax' for alerting us to this story.

## Bacon

For those you not going to Paris for Easter, a final reminder that Exeter is a viable alternative. This hitherto unsung city will be hosting Baycon, the world's best

# NEWS

games convention. Tournaments, cider, and *Games International* will all be there. For further details contact Bob Mulholland, 16 Coddington St, Newtown, Exeter EX1 2BU.

## GLC fights on

You don't like Mondays? This could soon change, for the GLC (RIP) Wargames Club has moved to a new central London location and now meets on Monday nights. This strange, thought to be defunct organisation can now be found in The Club Room, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (nearest tube Holborn). 6 till 10pm every Monday. Friendly atmosphere (unless you're playing with Les), boardgames, wargames, toy soldiers and PG Tips. What more could you want? (*how about some McVities?* - Ed)


## Who cares wins

The Gen Con Game Fair announces the '3rd Annual World Boardgaming Championship' on August 10 and 11 at the Mecca Convention Centre, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. That is 'world' as in 'World Series' baseball. The championships will feature twelve board wargames in which teams of three compete against other teams in a six round, no elimination wargaming tournament. The winning team will be declared 'world boardgaming champions' for 1990. Further details from: Gen Con Game Fair, PO Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147, USA.

## Euro Gen

On a similar subject, but closer to home, TSR are to stage the first ever European Gen Con. This will take place some time in November, with the dates and exact location to be announced in our next issue.

## ERRATA

In our last issue we listed the price of **Clubhouse Baseball** as £24.95. Unfortunately we discovered too late that the correct price for the game is £39.99. We hope nobody was inconvenienced by this mistake. 

## NEXT ISSUE

### HORSE RACING SPECIAL

Win Place & Show designer Tom Divoll describes how he created this great game.

### BREAKING DOWN THE WALLS

Mark Green discusses strategy in *Siege of Jerusalem*.

### WHISTLE TEST

George Crawshay looks back at the games that were top rated by *Games & Puzzles* and sees how they measure up now.

### REST IN PEACE

Whatever happened to *Montage*?

### APOCALYPSE THEN

Jonathan Turner goes back to the future.

### IN REVIEW

*Römer*, *Cover Up* and *Rollercoaster Hippo*

### WARGAMES

*Red Barricades*

### ROLEGAMES

*AD&D Forgotten Realms*, *Greyhawk Adventures* and *Lankhmar*, *D&D Creature Crucible*, *Cyberpunk Rockerboy*, *Ars Magica Covenants*

### COMPUTER GAMES

*688 Attack Sub*, *Knights of Legend*, *Hardball II*, *Midwinter*, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, *Future Wars*

All the above items are subject to change without notice. Ha!



# chart ★

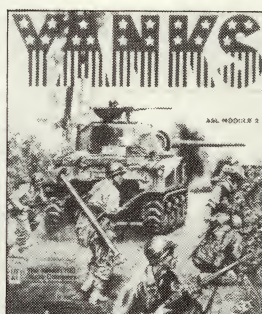
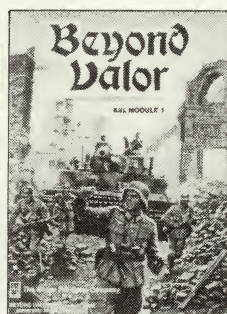
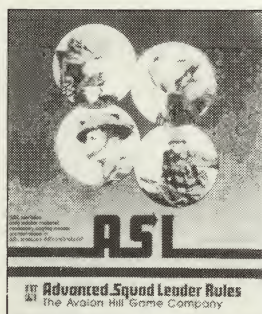
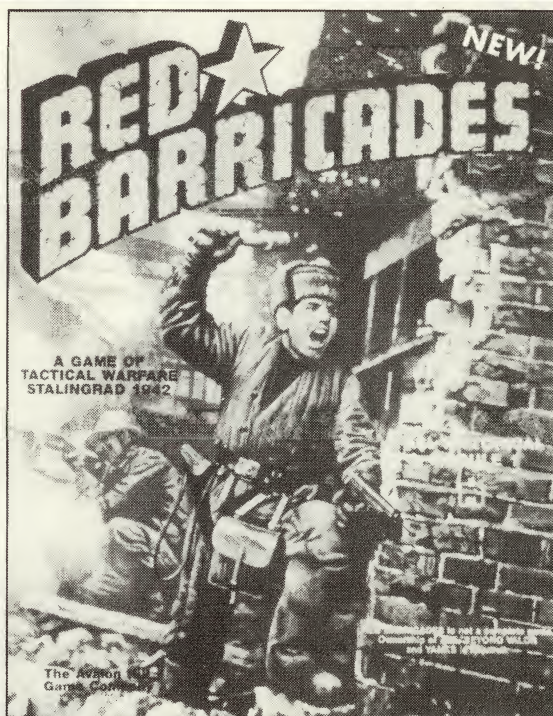
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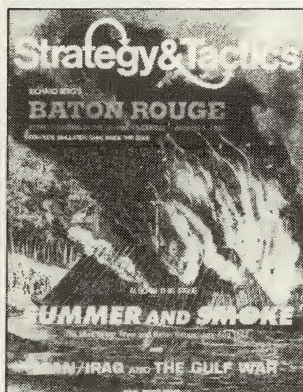
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## REVIEWS

## W A R | G A M E S

## BLUE MAX

(2ND EDITION)

DESIGNED BY  
PHIL HALLPUBLISHED BY  
GDW

PRICE £17.95

RATING: 9

Let me state my prejudices before we go any further:

More than fifteen years ago my brother and I, fired with enthusiasm by an excess of Biggles books and our grandfather's tales of his days in the RFC, made our own First World War air warfare campaign game. For months we carried out our cardboard missions over a squared paper map of part of the Western Front and logged the events in a school exercise book.

Even now, after years of wargaming, First World War aerial combat remains my favourite type of such games. Lee Brimmicombe-Wood covered the field fairly thoroughly in GI #3 if you want to know more about aerial wargames in general.

My favourite First World War air game is **Aces High** from 3W (subsequently expanded under the name **Blue Max** but having nothing to do with this game). The first edition of GDW's **Blue Max** was a pleasant introductory game comparable to **Sopwith**. GDW supremo Marc W Miller, who helped develop this game, was also instrumental in helping my own Small Furry Creatures Press publish the new edition of **En Garde!** (*No more shameless plugs, please* – Ed)

These were good reasons for wanting to like this second edition of **Blue Max**. Perversely the review copy was months in the mail and I had given it up for lost by the time that it arrived. This unex-

pected delay had a very pleasant consequence: the game arrived just days before my brother came to visit me. I was able to dogfight in the skies of France with my oldest adversary.

**Blue Max** is not aimed at experienced wargamers. It is not even aimed at experienced gamers. The rules make no assumption at all: 'When instructed to roll the [six-sided] die, the payer tosses (carefully) the single die and observes the number of spots which show on its top. That number is the number rolled.' Indeed, the 24-page rule book only attains that length by this kind of detailed explanation and the use of a huge typeface. Furthermore, the game components are sufficiently self explanatory to render the rule book largely superfluous after the first read.

The board is simply a blue sheet of paper with a grid of  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " hexes. One edge is marked as the Allies side and the other is the Axis. The aircraft are represented by 60 square tiles about 1" across with a detailed plan view of the aeroplane in full colour on the face and the ID number, type and historical detail about the actual plane depicted and its pilot on the back. The damage chits are also larger than is common in a wargame and only the altitude and status markers are of the conventional size. The use of these large counters greatly enhances the perceived quality of the game.

The only typographical error that we could find was the trivial omission of a British roundel from the Aircraft Manoeuvre Schedule for the Nieuport 17 but this would not impair anybody's understanding of the game. A complete beginner could open the box and be under way within half an hour.

Play is simple: choose aircraft, complete record sheets, place the counters behind



the lines on the appropriate sides of the board at any valid altitude (indicated by an altitude marker on top of the aircraft counter) and then use simultaneous movement and combat. Valid moves for each type of aircraft are shown on the associated Manoeuvre Schedule and are identified by a code that is written on the order sheet. Tailed pilots must reveal the direction of the manoeuvre to their tailers before they decide their own manoeuvre. Movement costs fuel. Combat costs ammunition. Run out of either and the obvious problems ensue. Combat orders are written and executed when all movement is complete. The combat resolution is based on a combat results table matching a die roll to an attacker's combat value modified by the usual factors of range, stability, speed and suchlike. The table yields a number of damage chits to draw. There are 35 such chits, blue on one side and red on the other. They give effects such as losing a number of points from a named part of the target, catching fire or being killed. The blue effects are less severe than the reds. Most results are kept secret.

The rules include the use of Lewis guns and observers. The altitude rules do little



to change the nature of the game. Running a campaign gives players opportunities to develop specific skills for experienced pilots and observers. These include enhanced tailing ability and increased accuracy at gunnery.

**Blue Max** is an entertaining dog-fight game with high quality components and clear, simple rules. There can be few games to beat it as an introduction to the concepts of board wargames. It is solely concerned with combat and, while this is sufficiently well simulated to keep even hardcore wargamers happy for a while, the campaign game reveals the ultimate weakness of the game: it is *solely* concerned with combat! Even fighter pilots did not spend all their time going out to find other fighters to kill. There were strategic considerations as well.

The war in the air was not fought entirely independent of the war in the trenches. The aircraft went on

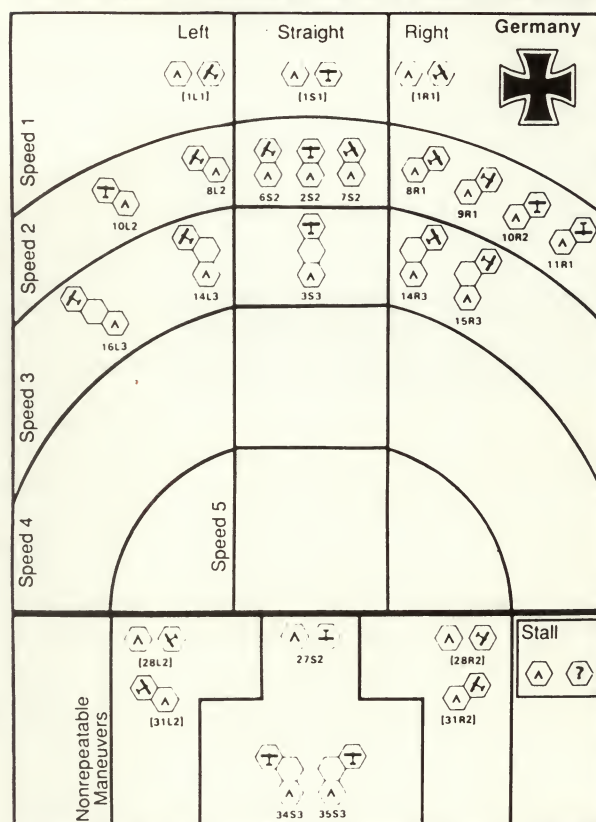
missions and these usually related to the ground. The major exception to this was the concept of 'patrol', but even this consisted of waiting to intercept and prevent the enemy from completing their ground-related mission. Few changes would be needed to include this element in **Blue Max**: a terrestrial hex map of the trenches and a set of missions such as balloon busting and reconnaissance. One player could have a (secret) mission while the other is on patrol trying to prevent this from being carried out.

My brother has gone home now, but if a black glove should fall into your garden tomorrow you will know what it means...

Theo Clarke

(An abridged version of Theo Clarke appears in The Small Furry Creatures Press.)

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# RISE AND FALL

DESIGNED BY  
KARSTEN ENGLEMANN

PUBLISHED BY  
ENGLEMAN MILITARY  
SIMULATIONS

PRICE £24.95

RATING: 7

**Rise and Fall** is a relatively simple 'fun' orientated game, though a rather better simulation than many. Ostensibly the game is about the fall of the Roman Empire, the most popular subject in ancient wargaming what with **Fall of Rome**, **Decline and Fall** and **Imperium Romanum** having blazed the trail. But in fact the game deals more with the socio-politics of early medieval Europe and the Middle East: barbarian hordes evolve into young, vigorous kingdoms which gradually become more civilised and transform into empires themselves for a final flowering before declining and falling to newly emerging states. As such it is an excellent vehicle for playing out the rise and (possible) fall of, say, the Franks, Arabs, Bulgars, Magyars, Huns, Goths, Vandals, Saxons, Vikings and so on all in a single game.

**Rise and Fall** comes in a colourful bookcase format box decorated with a cartoonish illustration calculated to appeal to the younger or non-wargame market but it is a thoroughbred wargame nevertheless. Inside are 576 counters, an unmounted 22" x 34" map, an 18 page rule book, five good quality 10-sided dice, a thick turn record sheet pad and an errata slip.

The counters are larger and thicker than average and come in bold primary colours. It helps to separate them with a pair of scissors. The various unit types are crudely but adequately illustrated with a cavalryman, infantryman, fort, ship, crown (for leader) and star (for revolt or capitol) and apart from that no other information is printed on them. Instead, combat and movement factors are printed on the map. This is because these change when a player transforms his status from barbarian to kingdom to empire. For example, a barbarian infantry unit has a combat strength of three, while a kingdom's is four and an empire's is five. National characteristics also come into play here with the various nations being stronger or weaker than the norm (ac-

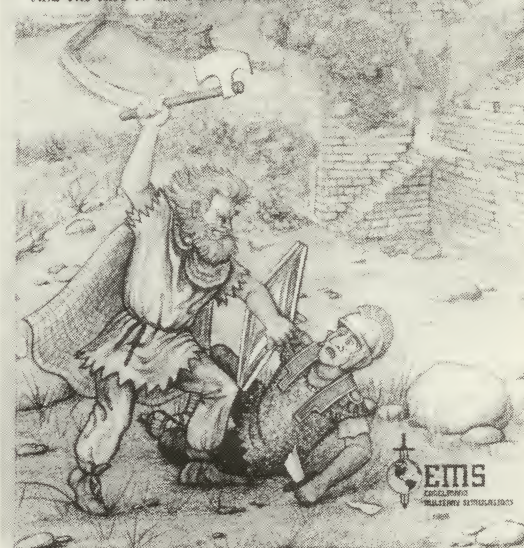
cording to their historical performance) all without having to use several different sets of counters. This versatile system is economical and works well because of the relatively few unit types in the game.

Unlike the box and counters, the map is impressive, almost a work of art. It portrays all of Europe (barring the Arctic Circle), North Africa and the Middle east and is divided into areas which do not exactly correspond to historical provinces or nations but rather function as irregularly shaped hexes. Each area is named, which adds colour to the game but also indicates whether it is civilised (printed in black) or barbarian (printed in red) and with the latter whether homeland (upper case) or tribal (lower case). Each area has an economic value and revolt factor which varies a lot from area to area along generally historical lines. Civilised areas are richer, but easier to conquer and control while barbarian areas are poorer and more revolt prone. The only terrain types are plain, forest and mountain. Arguably rivers, marsh, desert and cities could have been included, though these are undoubtedly reflected in the economic factors.

The rules are written in a light, informal, humorous tone and are simple to understand, being studded with almost too many examples! On the whole they are clear and easy to follow but even with the obviously hastily assembled errata sheet some sections remain a fuzzy shade of grey when black and white should be the order of the day. For example, there are no rules dealing with player interaction: odd in a multi-player game. Such matters might be too obvious for words – let's not step on any toes, it may simply be a matter of anything goes – but it helps to be told if players can borrow money from each other, forgo attacking allies and the like. That apart, the rules dealing with barbarian areas are the weakest: does a barbarian area which revolts after being conquered by an empire become an independent kingdom or revert to being an uncontrolled barbarian area? In the interests of the balance of play the latter is better. Or what happens to a barbarian player's homeland region when he becomes a kingdom – does it remain in his control or not? The latter is preferable because that then frees it for another player's use.

# RISE and FALL

A Game On The Fall Of Rome  
And The Rise Of The Barbarians



The turn record pad contains plenty of turn record sheets, enough for a few games before it becomes necessary to photocopy extra ones. Each player takes one at the start of the game and uses it to record his status, treasury, national characteristics, victory points and so on from turn to turn. A player's status is either B (barbarian), K (kingdom) or E (empire) followed by the number of turns he has been that status. For example, a player whose status is K10 has been a kingdom for 10 turns. From B4 on a player can change into a kingdom either voluntarily or, if he prefers otherwise, can dice to remain a barbarian, though the chance is inevitable because the chance of it happening increases by 10% every turn. Similarly from K11 on a player can change into an empire or dice to stay a kingdom, delaying the transformation.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each status. A barbarian receives lots of free units which do not require maintenance but these 'levies' are rather weak and stop after B3. A barbarian also has the advantage of choosing his moment when to enter play which can be devastating if exercised properly. A kingdom's units are stronger than a barbarian's, but have to be paid for. These are not too expensive, though, and all in all a player is militarily at his strongest as a kingdom. An empire's forces are the most powerful of all but are very expensive to keep in play. Furthermore an empire's areas start to revolt and become independent. At first this is not too bad but as the empire ages it becomes an increasing burden, so that not only must an empire player contend with opponents, but also with his empire falling



apart at the seams. A player can influence the latter by selecting his own level of taxation, an option unavailable to a kingdom. Lower taxation means fewer revolts but less revenue to maintain those awfully expensive imperial units while higher taxation results in the opposite. An additional consideration is that a player receives the same number of victory points per turn as his income. Consequently a player's victory points tend to peak when he is a young empire and can afford high taxation without worrying too much about revolts.

A player whose empire falls or who is otherwise dissatisfied with his position in the game, regardless of his status, can abandon his state at any time and start again at B1 in the horde of his choice a few turns later, taking his current victory point total with him. This is the heart of the game because it means that a player can never be knocked out or reduced to disinterest by being forced to continue from a weak position: revenge against the player who got you is possible there and then in the same game without having to wait until the next session. By the same token powerful players cannot afford to become smug or complacent because they can be 'ambushed' at almost any time by a newly emerging barbarian

horde or two. It all adds up to unparalleled dynamism and absorption in the game.

The sequence of play is straightforward. Players conduct their turns individually, a new barbarian going first, giving him the opportunity to make the most of a surprise attack, with the others going in the same order as the previous turn. A player first determines his status, then raises levies (barbarian only), tests for revolts (empire only), moves his units, attacks enemy units in the areas he has invaded, then collects his revenue from controlled provinces (including newly

conquered ones), maintains units and builds new ones and finally totals his victory points. The game features a lot of dice rolling especially for revolts and combat but luck does not predominate over skill. For example, apart from lower taxation a player can reduce the likelihood of revolts by garrisoning the most suspect provinces. Similarly larger and stronger forces almost always defeat smaller and weaker ones even though the defender has the advantage of terrain and 'hitting' first. Another good bet of course is to strike at undefended areas and so on. A number of optional rules are available



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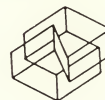


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which provide extra colour for little additional complexity. These include national characteristics, leaders, starting as K1 in independent kingdoms rather than B1 in barbarian homelands, civilising barbarian areas and unit mutinies.

There are several scenarios, mainly for three to six players, each with its own variants. A very good solitaire scenario is also provided which places the player in charge of the Roman Empire and having to deal with barbarian invasions from without and revolts from within. The player wins by amassing enough victory points before being wiped out, though if you are very clever it is possible to expand the empire! In the other scenarios the first player to reach a certain total of victory points wins the game, which can take a long time in some variants, requiring more than a single session to complete. There is not two player scenario, which is a pity because there is plenty of scope for one or two in a game of this nature. However, a second edition is in the works which will redress this and probably include, rumour has it, variants on the Punic Wars and Crusades amongst others. But even as it is *Rise and Fall* is worth a look and will be enjoyed by gamers with an interest in the subject.

*Robert Hulston*

## NAPOLEON'S BATTLES

DESIGNED BY  
CRAIG TAYLOR

PUBLISHED BY  
AVALON HILL

PRICE £20.45

RATING: 5

Surprisingly, Avalon Hill have never before produced a set of miniatures rules. *Napoleon's Battles* breaks this duck but unfortunately the boys from Baltimore seem to have missed a good opportunity to corner this fragmented market by introducing a novel design. Instead, they have plumped for well established but undoubtedly stodgy mechanics. This is sad because the currently available Napoleonic figure rules are generally of a mediocre standard and a definitive, and innovative, set is long overdue.

The bookcase box contains three booklets, two sets of attractive 15mm figure counters (nominally French and Al-

lies but pretty universal), play markers and charts, a set of troop rating tables, movement templates and some rather in-different cardboard terrain. The booklets cover the main rules, scenario details and a 'Boy's Own' introductory guide which gets a little overexcited at times but offers some pertinent, if rather sketchy, information on the period and the miniatures hobby. All the books are printed to a high standard but the artwork is rather weak in places.

The meat of the package is the rule booklet and, for comparison, this is what you would normally expect to pay £3 to £5 for in the UK. It may well be that the American market expects to pay more to get accessories and a box with their figure rules. This theory would seem to be borne out by *Empire IV*, *Johnny Reb* and *Harpoon*. In the down to earth UK, one tends to buy the rules and perhaps the ubiquitous army list and you're on your own from there. Sadly, this rudimentary approach can condemn those lacking in imagination to a diet of 1000 point battles with symmetrical terrain. On balance, each approach can benefit a type of gamer. If you are a beginner it is nice to have everything ready to play as offered by *Napoleon's Battles*, but that comes at a cost. For the more experienced player, especially one with existing figures, I

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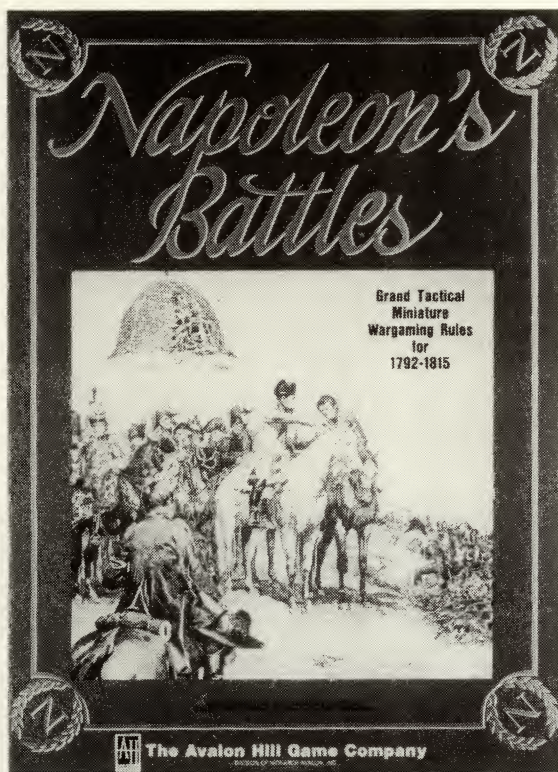
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men indicating regiment or brigade strength. Fortunately, the game rolls along quickly enough to handle these larger forces.

I wish I'd had access to more troops to see how a large battle would pan out, but unfortunately this review is based on one game using all the counters from the box (a dozen 'regiments' equating to around 14 000 infantry per side plus cavalry and guns) and a smaller game using my old 25mm troops which really needed a bit more space. From what I could deduce from these actions and the demonstration game I saw at Origins, the system holds up well and should be more than capable of running games of 20-30 infantry units per side plus proportionate cavalry and artillery, though you would need a large table for battles of

doubt that introductory guides, terrain and counters are that vital. That said, if done well, the scenarios and army selections do add a finishing touch and can fuel one's enthusiasm for the game.

The basic rules run to twenty-odd pages, including lots of well explained examples. The rules use the numbered clauses and sub-clauses approach ('refer to rule 3.1.2.4 for exceptions') and are rather dull and long winded, but thankfully fairly clear despite the excessive use of acronyms. Thinking back, I am sure that Craig Taylor has never written a really succinct set of rules and here he compounds the problem by trying to explain concepts along the way with some chatty American humour which doesn't come off. As ever, much of the overlong text is unavoidably spent preventing loophole lawyers having their wicked way. Nevertheless, as someone who has read a few Napoleonic rule books, these made reasonably good sense and I could at least pick out what the designer was getting at. From a beginner's viewpoint though, I am sure they would not offer such an easy ride.

**Napoleon's Battles** uses scales of 1:120 for infantry, 1:80 for cavalry and a ground scale of 1" = 100 yards. The latter is pretty standard fare for 15mm but the figure scales weight the game heavily towards recreating the grand tactical battles at corps or even army level, rather than the usual divisional matchups. These larger battles are possible, and desirable, because of the system's emphasis on the upper chain of command and the fact that even the smallest units have around 1500

this scope.

The game system is pretty basic and can be run from the quick reference charts. It is essentially a jazzed up movement/fire bound with alternate moves and reaction opportunities. This approach seems to be the norm these days, rather than awkward simultaneous systems with written orders or markers, and **Napoleon's Battles** is no better or worse than the others. However, where it really starts to show its lack of originality is in the fire, melee and morale systems which use the now somewhat antiquated system of modifier tables. Each type of troop is rated by factors ('national characteristics') which are adjusted by applying a dozen or so modifiers. This needs to be done every time a unit fires, fights or tests morale and although you eventually get to know what modifier applies where and which to quickly skip over, the result is time consuming, mechanical and rather boring. What is worse, the designers have still failed to get the history right. For example, in the effects of fire and melee combat musket fire causes relatively light casualties but infantry combat is very bloody: completely the opposite of what the historical accounts indicate happened. Secondly, probably because of the above (though it may simply be the luck factor), there is also a problem with French column attacks on a steady British line which seem to give way far too easily. The designers also fall for the old chestnut of differentiating between French Line and Light regiments whereas in fact there was no qualitative distinction (apart from their uniforms).

On the upside, there are some neat ideas which pull **Napoleon's Battles** a little above the norm. Particularly good is the emphasis on command control and the command span concept. This is a chain of command restriction that requires subordinate commanders to remain within a certain distance of their superiors. The better the commander, the wider their command span and their ability to influence combat and initiative. Initially, it looked as if this would involve a lot of tedious measuring but in practice it is not too difficult to run a quick visual check each turn. I also liked the rules for all out attacks (usually in the shape of the Imperial Guard), bad weather, the cavalry recall rules and the treatment of local and army level morale tests and 'dispersal' levels.

The scenario booklet starts with a couple of simple introductory games using the components supplied and then goes on to describe detailed orders of battle for several major clashes including Marengo, Eylau and Waterloo. It also includes prepared labels marked with important factors to copy and attach to units and commanders. All you need to do is supply the figures. Although these listings do little more than quantify and classify the forces at, say, Borodino, this is not easy and some valuable effort has been put into this section. In addition, there is a comprehensive section on design-your-own games which is linked closely to the troop charts. These provide ratings (unadjusted for specific battles) with notes on hundreds of troop types and commanders. Again, these are impressive in scope and detail even if some of the factors are rather questionable, but that is par for the course for a system based on national characteristics. All the major powers are covered from the Revolutionary Wars onwards plus the Spanish, Portuguese, the German states, Italy, Sweden and even the often overlooked Ottoman Turks.

Overall, I get the impression that **Napoleon's Battles** was sanctioned for production based on Craig Taylor's undoubted enthusiasm for the subject and the US market's rising interest in miniature gaming. The Napoleonic era is an obvious and popular choice and at least the designer has given us a wide spread of coverage within this rich historical period. The sheer number of charts, troop types and factors is very impressive and there are a few neat ideas. Sadly, though, quantity cannot replace quality and at the end of the day this is no more than a decidedly average set of miniatures rules with a few smart counters thrown in.

*Mike Siggins*



## STRATEGY SEMINAR

# Victory In The Pacific

*Mark Green provides some hints for the early stages of this classic wargame*

**Victory in the Pacific** is a gem of a naval game from Avalon Hill on the Pacific War 1941 to 1944. Playable in under three hours (eight turns), its unusual style of area movement and almost tabletop combat make for fine, colourful contests. It is a popular classic with seasoned wargamers, but is also easy to learn and so a good choice for the beginner.

The Pacific war zone is divided up into 13 sea areas which contain eight major bases and 14 minor bases. Major bases are only captured by two turns of siege (possession of the surrounding area) while minor bases can also be captured by ground troops. Each area has a victory point (VP) value for each side, and VPs for possession are awarded at the end of each turn. So the game turns on control of the sea areas.

This is also reflected in the game pieces, there being a handful of air and marine counters but masses of lavish ship counters. These are printed with attack, defence, and speed factors plus, in the case of aircraft carriers, the airpower rating. Ships are back printed a different colour so that those on patrol can be distinguished from fast raiders.

Each turn units are moved out from their bases. Patrolling ships are deployed first, followed by land based air units (LBAs), marines and only lastly the raiding task forces. Patrolling ships and LBAs control areas, but being committed first makes them vulnerable to the more flexible raiding ships. Opposing forces in the same area are removed to the side of the board and a simple but effective combat system is used. But enough of the game mechanics, what of strategy and tactics? This



article will look at some of the stronger options of both sides during the first five turns, where the foundations of victory and defeat are largely laid.

## THE JAPANESE DILEMMA

The Japanese player starts with a surprise(!) attack on Pearl Harbour and the expectation of naval superiority for the first half of the game. But US reinforcements will eventually swamp you so the game must be won by amassing a commanding VP lead before turn six. This can only be done by controlling 75% of the areas for a number of turns.

The problem is that the US move second in each phase, so can always raid against the weakest link. It is impossible to be strong everywhere and a powerful presence in more than three or four areas is beyond the capacity of the Imperial Japanese Navy. So good Japanese strategy tends towards the establishment of a strong perimeter to guard an inner core of

valuable areas. But this is still a defensive posture which will hand the initiative to the enemy. What is needed is a powerful offensive strategy which will pin down the United States Navy and, with luck, destroy the 1942 fleet.

The first turn normally sees a heavy raid on Pearl Harbour by every Japanese carrier that can get there. Five ships patrol each of the Japanese and Marianna areas while the rest go into Central Pacific. Minimal air units are used to patrol South Pacific and Marshalls, while the rest massacre the British in Indonesia. All Japanese ships return to base at Truk at the end of this first turn.

The Japanese Navy should then move to dominate the Hawaiian Islands and try to capture the main US base. Forget about Midway and Guadalcanal – go for the big one! This threat will probably force the Americans to fight a battle it cannot win, and if enough resources are dedicated you will capture Pearl Harbour anyway.



The best plan is to use marines to capture Johnston Island on turn two, to have an air base for turn three. On turn two use air power and a few ships to complete your work in Indonesia, South Pacific as well as lightly patrolling the safe core areas. Send the main fleet with plenty of patrollers into Hawaiian waters. Repeat the process on turn three, but with the added option of basing airpower on Johnston. If the Americans fight you, there will be the added bonus of slaughtering their forces. The main gain is the strong position covering a sizeable area of the board and the extra VPs of course. Holding Indonesia to Hawaii gives the Japanese player possession of a four area perimeter and a probable +6 to +9 increase in VPs per turn for turns two to five.

A few aggressive players advocate following up with a move against Samoa and an attempt to eliminate all US main bases from the game! While this may finish the US starting fleet it will likely fail against airpower and result in a gravely weakened Japanese Navy. This is a mistake if you want to offer any opposition to the massive new US forces coming into play. If the Japanese mostly control the areas between Japan, Indonesia and Hawaii during the first five turns they should have amassed the maximum VP lead of 29 points. Now they have to defend that lead by stalling the US counter-attack which comes storming across the Pacific.

The Imperial Japanese Navy cannot defeat the Americans now, but it can force them to concentrate by maintaining a credible threat. If the US has to concentrate they are unable to recapture ground so fast. Airpower must be used to maintain some control and score points, but the bulk of the fleet should be placed in raiding status ready to pick off over-ambitious US advances. This forces the US to be more conservative in their placement of patrollers, and thus limits the rate at which the American can pile up VPs.

### THE AMERICAN DREAM

You have to accept that you are going to get pushed around a lot until mid-1943. The worst that can happen is that you lose your entire starting fleet, the Japs control most of the board, and they have the maximum VP lead of +29 by turn five. Your new forces on turns six and seven will still give you naval superiority and you have an inherently stronger air force. You will push them back and eventually take Tokyo. However, you may not win this game because it stops in October 1944! So your task is to trip up the enemy early on so that your massed forces don't

have such a huge task when they do appear.

The American dream is a game where the US Navy has damaged the Japanese fleet, prevented enemy conquest of key bases, retained advanced bases for the counter-attack, and kept the Japanese VP lead to a low score (under 20) by the end of turn five. This can be achieved by patience, balance, an eye for opportunity and a bit of luck!

The US player must husband his resources and base them so as to threaten as many areas as possible. Patrol with ships to a minimum, and place most in raiding mode each turn. Your raiders move last in a turn and this flexibility must be exploited ruthlessly. Any area weakly guarded can be attacked at odds determined by you, both to take the area away from the enemy and to butcher his force on station.

Your first opportunity occurs on turn two, if you have been able to base any American carriers in Australia from turn one. These should watch for the opportunity to raid into Indonesia, along with the full British Indian Ocean fleet, and airpower flying out of Singapore. Against the three to four Japanese LBAs normally present here, two British carriers, two LBAs and two US carriers have a better than even chance of breaking Japanese control of the area and preventing the fall of Singapore and the Philippines. This would be a major success. Don't get too excited, though: the very threat will probably force the Japanese to deploy much stronger forces here to prevent such a coup. Fair enough – you have caused him to cancel other moves, such as an attack on Hawaii or the use of LBAs to control South Pacific and Marshalls.

If a move into Indonesia is not on the cards, what else can you do? Is the Imperial Japanese Navy going for Hawaii? Look to see if you can patrol with two cruisers, then reinforce with carriers, into the Marshall Islands. Control of this area splits the Japanese from their main base

at Truk, throwing a spanner into any plan of conquering Hawaii unless he bases his main fleet out on the periphery in a newly captured Johnston Isle. Such a bull-headed commitment to the conquest of Pearl leaves you free to cut into the heart of the Greater Co-Prosperity sphere with options of raiding the Mariannas, Central Pacific or even Japanese home waters! Of course, the Japanese may decide to counter your move into the Marshalls, in which case you have to abandon your cruisers and get your compensation eliminating whatever he has put into Hawaii on patrol! He might try to contest both Hawaii and Marshalls, in which case you can decide whether you fancy tackling one half of the Japanese Navy with virtually all of yours.

This examination of the turn two options shows the kind of opportunity available to a sharp Allied commander. Set traps, snipe at his positions, exploit any mistakes. Place the minimum of ships on patrol and keep the bulk for raiding, exploiting the last move advantage to the full. If the Japanese move somewhere in force, ignore it and go elsewhere. If Japanese ships are scattered, move to massacre one portion with everything available. Remember that the first five turns will be a holding action for you, unless an unexpected opportunity arises. So don't fret if you are unable to counter the Japanese moves on a particular turn; it probably means you are forcing him to be very cautious.

One thing for the Allied commander to be wary of in particular is the superiority of the Japanese ships at surface warfare. Their cruisers, the most numerous element in both fleets, are much better than their western counterparts. A battle which starts roughly even can soon turn against the British and Americans if fought mainly by gunfire, rather than by carrier aircraft. **GI**

*Next issue Mark turns his attention to the recently re-released game **Siege of Jerusalem**.*

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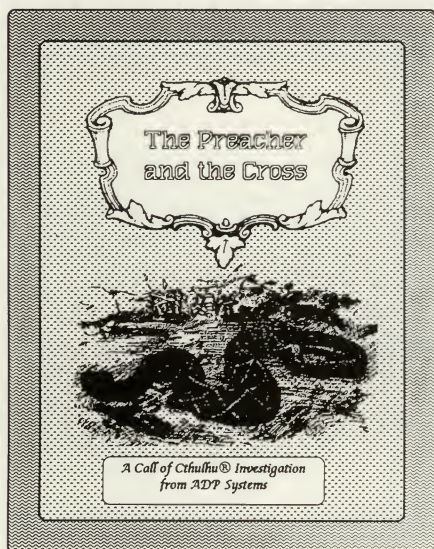
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## THE PREACHER AND THE CROSS

It all seems very straightforward: a wealthy woman has been experiencing recurring dreams foretelling the murder of a priest. If your players can crack the symbolism of the dreams, then they can prevent the death. If only it was that simple. Interpreting the dreams leads the player characters into a frantic investigation of a bizarre conspiracy. If you think I'm being vague, you're right. This scenario depends heavily on investigation for the adventure to work at all. To have even a hint of the real plot could ruin the fun for all concerned, so I hardly dare mention a single encounter for fear of making this product's purchase redundant.



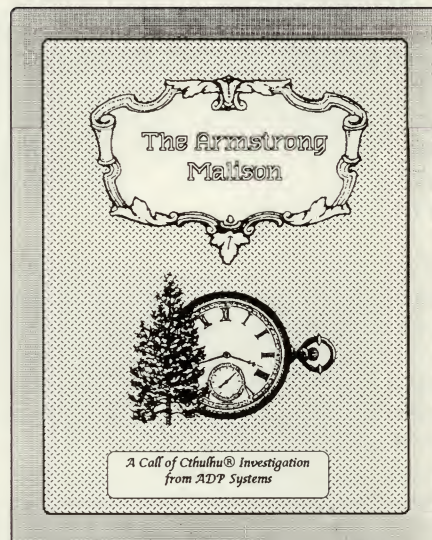
I can, however, tell you how this web of conspiracy and mystery is implemented. For a start, leave your combat orientated characters clipped in your ring binder, for without a team of characters who make Sherlock Holmes look like Inspector Clouseau, you are unlikely to progress far. Penetrating a veil of secrecy will lead the players deeper into the mystery while still not revealing the aims of the villains. Only when the adventure nears its climax will the players finally realise the full extent of the nefarious scheme, and I think most keepers will find that their players will be suitably shocked at this point.

ADP Systems is a new name to me, but any extra source of **Call of Cthulhu** material is to be welcomed, even if this desktop published volume does not reach the aesthetic standards set by Chaosium. My major reservation about **The Preacher and the Cross** is that the adventure is so cerebral in its approach. Characters and players who favour deduction and investigation should progress smoothly to the final encounter, while those who think with a sawn-off shotgun and a baseball bat will doubtless find themselves progressing with equal rapidity towards a rather intimate date with the electric chair! Beyond this, it has to be said that the adventure has only peripheral connections with the Cthulhu Mythos, and never really generates any sort of Lovecraftian atmosphere. Far more minor flaws include a player handout that assumes several actions for one of the players, and the use of an unfortunate encounter arising on a roll of (100 - Luck). As this produces a chance equal to that of the player failing a luck roll, why use this rather pointless mechanic rather than letting the player make a Luck roll to avoid the encounter? On the whole, though, this is a reasonable adventure for more cerebral players, but by no means an essential purchase.

*Rating: 5.*

## THE ARMSTRONG MALISON

A mysterious stranger turns up on a character's doorstep, late one night. He claims to bring a message from an old friend, and will pass it on in return for \$100. So



begins **The Armstrong Malison** (just to save you digging out your dictionary, 'malison' is an archaic word meaning 'curse'). The investigators are soon making their way to West Virginia, ostensibly to liberate the aforementioned old acquaintance from the asylum where he claims he is being held against his will. The mining town of Armstrong provides the background for the story of corruption and unholy worship that enfolds throughout this adventure.

One of Lovecraft's staple plot devices was the isolated community populated by folk wary of strangers, and **The Armstrong Malison** puts this setting to excellent use. From the moment that the scenario begins, the adventure is alive with menace and fear. Although the price is a little high for an obviously computer-produced book, the atmosphere alone almost justifies the cost. The product is free from significant errors, and although the odd typographical error does make an appearance, I'm told that the released version (I was given a pre-production copy to review) has been tidied up somewhat. The only serious flaw (if it can be called that) is that the adventure is rather linear and relatively brief.

All in all this is a fine **Call of Cthulhu** adventure, marred only by the rather high price, which is presumably dictated by the relatively small print run of the product. Still, if you want an atmosphere



laden scenario, you could certainly do far worse than this.

Rating: 7

## THE CURSE

In this scenario the action begins with an eldritch stone tablet, delivered by the postman to a player character. A nice touch this: get the players paranoid early in the adventure, and the rest should be plain sailing (for the Keeper, at least). From there one, things get steadily worse for the investigators, with vicious, unprovoked attacks, serial killings, and even a break in at the Miskatonic University (is nothing sacred?). Before too long, the players should find all these apparently unconnected events making some sort of horrifying sense.

Fine in theory, but what about the practice? Well, the whole thing ties together rather nicely. In common with the other ADP Systems *Call of Cthulhu* releases, the plot is supported by a vast background of research material for the investigators to unearth. Once they have collated the information, then it's up to them to make sure that they interpret the facts correctly. Suffice to say that the array of data is sensibly structured, with the conclusions that the players need to draw being perfectly reasonable ones.

What sets this scenario apart from similar adventures is that it is designed to be slotted into an existing campaign. This is clearly a mixed blessing, for while it continues any existing continuity in an ongoing campaign, it will prove to be hard to run as a stand alone adventure. Should you choose to insert this into your campaign, then a great amount of leg work has already been done, with non player characters from Chaosium adventures

making return appearances, and the scenario requiring only one prior event to have taken place (and a rather commonplace one at that).

The main threat in the adventure is a 'conventional' horror one, rather than the more outré Lovecraftian ones, and while some people don't mind this sort of liberty being taken with the Cthulhu Mythos, I have to admit to being a traditionalist, and would rather have seen something a little more alien make a slithering appearance. Other than that my only gripe is that the climax is a little vague, due to the author leaving the

Keeper to tailor it to his own campaign. Still, if you're not discouraged by the small amount of work that will be needed to fit this into your own game, then this is a fine adventure, which strikes a near perfect balance between investigation and combat. It's just a shame that ADP Systems couldn't have kept the price a little lower for a desktop published book.

Rating: 7

Mike Jarvis

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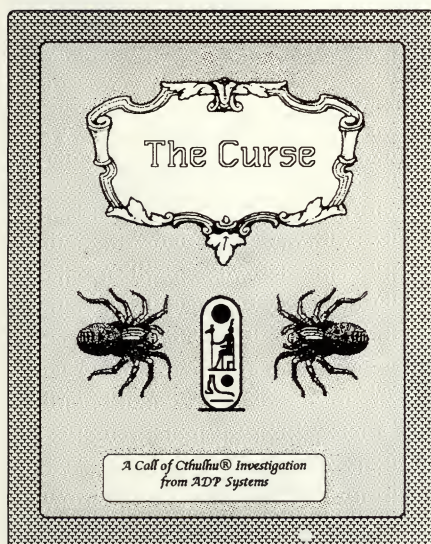
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## CRISIS ON CLOUD CITY

### STAR WARS ADVENTURE

DESIGNED BY  
CHRIS KUBASIK

PUBLISHED BY  
WEST END

PRICE £6.99

RATING: 4

The trouble with designing *Star Wars* scenarios is that you have to create something that is in the mould of the films and yet does not slavishly copy them. Unfortunately, though *Crisis on Cloud City* tries to be a little different, it ends up being a little closer to a horror or cyberpunk film than to the true spirit of *Star Wars*.

The adventure is set (surprise, surprise) on Cloud City, which gives West End the opportunity to use lots of film stills, and

the writer the chance to introduce film hero Lando Calrissian as a non player character. For those who have played the previous *Star Wars* adventure *Starfall*, a couple of familiar characters from that scenario also appear. The plot concerns a crazy super-droid, an Imperial spy and a creepy virus all let loose in the floating city. There are some good ideas and the plot flows along quite smoothly, but the horror element, however mild, ruins much of the scenario's flavour and may have to be excised by the referee to stay true to the *Star Wars* feel.

The game's other feature is to introduce a deck of cards and rules for the game Sabacc. A sort of Blackjack variant, the game doesn't fully use the nicely designed deck, and an excessive random element appears to constantly mess up the bidding. However, I'm sure that enterprising referees can adapt the game enough to make more use of the deck and introduce a greater element of skill and bluff in the bidding.

The card deck and West End's usual excellent production make *Crisis* an attractive package. I just wonder, though, when they are going to bring out more scenarios that ring true to the *Star Wars* universe,

and don't just ape other SF genres and themes.

Lee Brimmicombe-Wood



## SHADOWRUN

DREAMCHIPPER  
DESIGNED BY  
DAVE ARNESON

DNA/DOA  
DESIGNED BY  
JAMES D LONG

PUBLISHED BY  
FASA

PRICE £5.70 each

RATING: 7

### DREAMCHIPPER

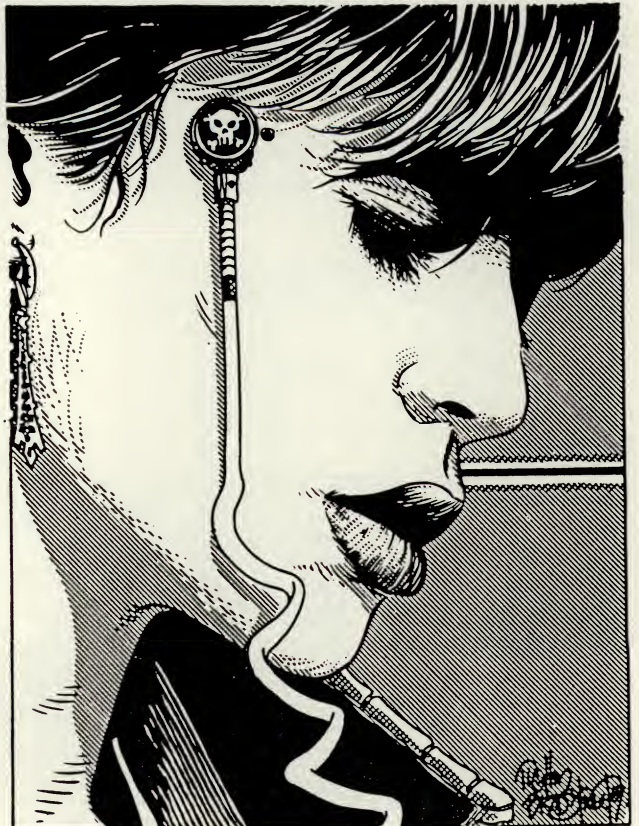
*Dreamchipper* is an 80 page scenario which takes place in *Shadowrun*'s campaign setting of the Seattle Megaplex. The production is up to the usual excellent standard with plenty of character illustrations, maps and handouts for the referee.

Dreamchips are big biz in the nightmare world of 2050; able to inject hallucinatory fantasies directly into a person's

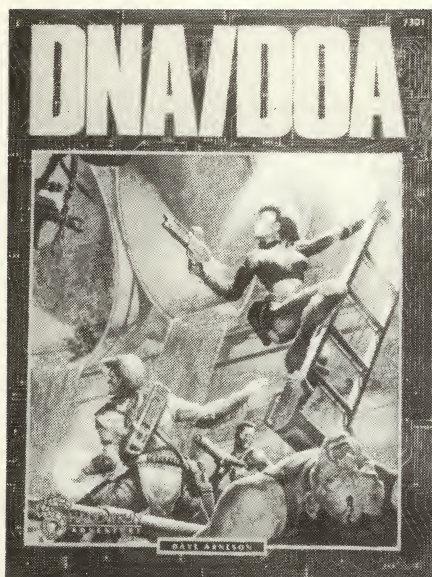
cerebral cortex, they satisfy addicts in a way that archaic chemical substances never could. However, when a batch of prototype military grade chips are lifted by a strike team of Shadowrunners a whole nest of homets is stirred up. Not only is there the offer of big money for recovering of the chips, but the theft may have something to do with a street army threatening to carve up the city and the mad slasher who is stalking the night.

*Dreamchipper* is an adventure for a group of three or four Shadowrunners that requires the players to roll up their sleeves and get to work. There are plenty of leads for players to follow in their search for the stolen Dreamchips, and some interesting non player characters to encounter in the grimy neon-lit underworld of Seattle. The scenario has a street atmosphere,

and (fortunately) the annoying fantasy element doesn't intrude. *Dreamchipper* runs at a slower pace than its predecessor *Mercurial*, but there's much more scope for character interaction and there are







enough lead-ons to make it an excellent kick-off for any campaign.

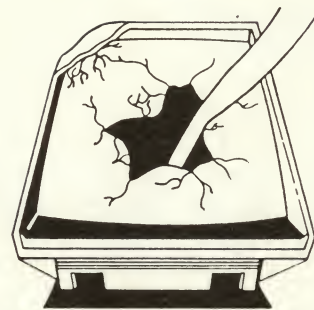
## DNA/DOA

DNA/DOA is a 64 page Shadowrun adventure from the pen of D&D designer

Dave Arneson. Set in the campaign city of Seattle and the nearby Tacoma district, DNA/DOA explores the underground world and society of the magically mutated orks.

In this adventure a band of troubleshooting shadowrunners have to trek their way through the ork infested sewers of Tacoma to raid the Biolabs of the Aztechnology corporation. In outline, the adventure is little more than a high-tech dungeon and suffers the limitations of being such. It is combat heavy and shows little originality with its opponents, particularly when gene-spliced werewolves and giant cockroaches appear. However, there is enough shady dealing going on to keep the scenario interesting, and it is one of the first adventures to integrate the game's high fantasy and cyberpunk origins rather than tack one on the other. Nice try.

Lee Brimmicombe-Wood



*I must be cracking up.*

puter may have gone, but the Secret Societies, Clones, unreliable R&D gadgets, bad puns and megaviolence – in short, all the Old Jokes – are still there. The designers seem to have gone out of their way to keep as many Old Jokes as possible. This is still very much the Alpha Complex that you know and are bored with, even if all the screens are blank or smashed.

Around fifteen writers contributed to this vision of a new future. There are some overlaps. There is also a lot of haphazard arrangement, and finding the section you're after can be hard. A third of the book is taken up with a scenario (more bad puns and little more) and scenario ideas which are more of the same. The coup de resistance is '101 Uses For The Dead Computer' which is better than leaving the final fourteen pages blank, but only just.

The joke of *Paranoia* died long ago, and the scenarios that West End Games chucked out have each buried it a little deeper. Now it's been dug up and proclaimed as good as new. You may want to believe it, but it smells pretty bad to me. If you still play *Paranoia*, you'll want this, but if your copy is gathering dust on a shelf, *Crash Course Manual* is not a good enough reason to pick it up again.

James Wallis

## CRASH COURSE MANUAL

PARANOIA SUPPLEMENT

DESIGNED BY  
DOUG KAUFMAN AND  
DIVERSE HANDS

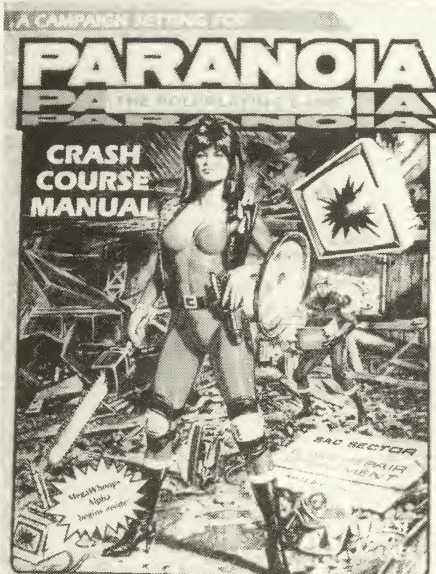
PUBLISHED BY  
WEST END GAMES

PRICE £9.95

RATING: 3

*Paranoia* was probably the first major 'one-trick' rolegame. It was possibly the most fun a lot of rolegamers had ever had, for at least two months. As soon as you understood the joke it became rather dull. Therefore the *Crash Course Manual* would seem a good idea; a radical change to the old background, allowing referees to give everything a new twist, seems an excellent idea. What is that twist? The Computer, your friend the Computer, watcher of your every waking minute, your every sleeping minute and everybody else's waking and sleeping minutes too, has crashed. Whirr. Click. Grunk. Phut. Kablooeey.

This may seem to be the idea that *Paranoia* needed to give it a whole new lease of life. Unfortunately it isn't. The Com-



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## REVIEWS

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## HARPOON

DESIGNED BY  
LARRY BONDPUBLISHED BY  
THREE SIXTY

PRICE £40

RATING: 8

GRAPHICS: 8

*Available for the PC.*

There is no doubt that the GDW board-game **Harpoon** attracted a large number of devoted players. The subject matter – modern naval combat – seems to be very popular at present. **Harpoon** is also one of the most complex boardgame simulations around, and is not a game for wimps. This is head down, mindless number crunching for the type of people who believe complexity always equals realism. It's hard work, the games can take hours to play and the action is sporadic and deadly. Now, at last, rushing to the rescue comes Three Sixty, a new software house who have managed to successfully transfer the boardgame to the IBM PC. And what a difference it makes.

As befits a £40 program, **Harpoon** comes neatly packaged. The programs are supplied on three 360K disks and an alternative 1.2Mb floppy. Because of **Harpoon's** rather demanding hardware requirements, I should note here that your PC must have 640K RAM and that it doesn't run from 360K drives. I would also say a mouse and a hard disk are almost essential. The box also contains a clear and very comprehensive manual, sound tactical tips from Mr Bond and, best of all, a short article by that good ol' boy, Tom Clancy.

The programmers of **Harpoon** set themselves a hard target. The idea was to transform the **Harpoon** boardgame and thereby remove the drudgery of record keeping, plotting and the trivia of running the advanced weapon and detection systems. Surprisingly enough, all this has



been achieved. The program provides a staff assistant who takes care of the basic stuff like watching the sonar, reporting contacts and loading the torpedoes while the players get on with commanding the available forces. The most interesting elements such as planes, helicopters and the various ship weapons remain under your control.

The result is a game in which you spend a lot of time making important decisions and a very small proportion actually changing course and the like. The feel of the situation is captured well as most of the time you have absolutely no idea where the enemy is and only your sensors can help here. Even so, you can go a whole game and not find anything. When the action starts, the atmosphere can get quite tense with missiles appearing from nowhere. Hunting submarines can be fascinating and the planes are great fun. Occasionally though the lack of action (when moving convoys for instance) can make things a little boring. Thank goodness then for the time compression feature. This neat and essential option means the frequent inactive periods are quickly glossed over by varying the time

scale. The drawback though is that one tends to be brought sharply back to real time by a shower of incoming SSMs.

**Harpoon** is designed to be expandable. This first release provides the main programs and an extensive database of information serves the 'battlesets'. These are basically scenario packs that cover a certain geographic area or set of engagements and future sets will be supplied on disk for instant play. The first one is supplied with **Harpoon** and covers twelve scenarios centred on the GIUK (Green-

land, Iceland, UK) gap. These vary from running a couple of gunboats along those crinkly bits of Norway to a full blown invasion of the UK. The player is free to take either side. At all times during these games, full details of all your forces are available on information screens which have some neat pictures and plenty of data to establish whether your anti-aircraft frigate has any hope of stuffing the approaching sub.

Although the game seems to be designed for one overall commander and thus one player, some of the larger situations can easily accommodate split commands. We found that one player on ships and choppers and another on subs and planes works well. The extra brainpower normally helps as the scenarios can be really tough. Not only is there a distinctly lethal enemy out there but there are factors such as bad weather, equipment malfunction and those pesky submarines to take care of. This is because there is no true play balance; **Harpoon** aims to be more a simulation rather than an even contest which given the topic is probably the right approach.



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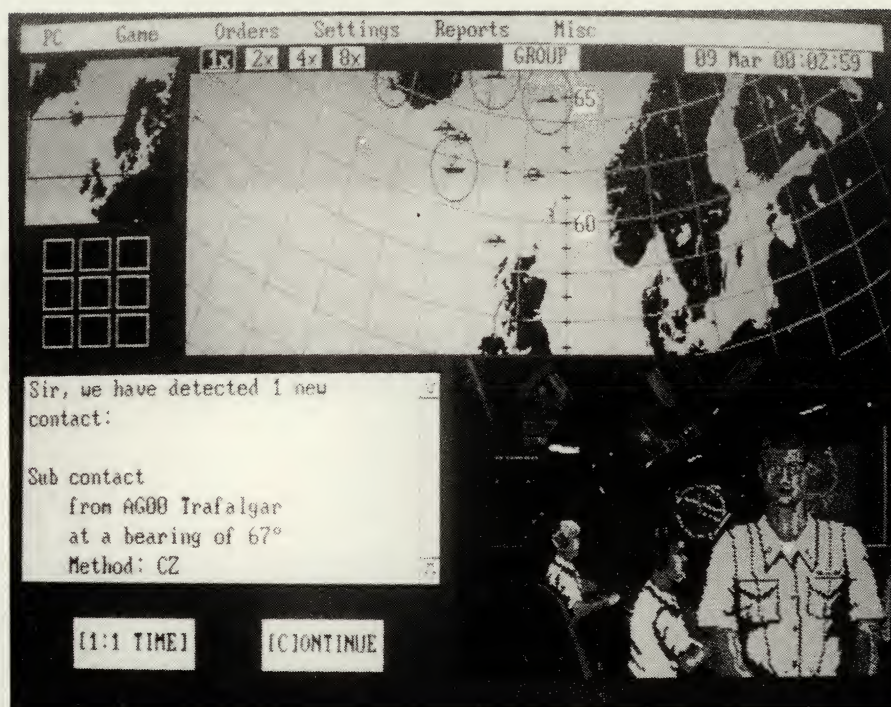
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EGA is becoming the norm these days and therefore I have to say that **Harpoon** looks superb in high resolution colour. The screen is split into strategic and tactical maps, command boxes and various information sections and when the firing starts we get animated missiles and burning ships. All very impressive. The frequently used commands can be input by keyboard or drop down menus and this is all clear and effectively handled. Having gone through the horror of course plotting for the boardgame, I am pleased to say that the computer version is simplicity itself.

Three Sixty have made a significant debut with **Harpoon**. The program must have been hellishly difficult to get right (it took nearly three year's work apparently), the graphics are generally first rate and the 'user interface' is well handled. As yet, I haven't found any bugs, the program cracks along on a 386 machine and, aside from the infrequent inactivity, it plays really well. For once, because of the amount of work that went into what is a niche market product, the asking price is actually almost reasonable. Let's hope that the future battlesets are not too ex-



pensive. Overall, I am a little worried that because of the specialised subject matter **Harpoon** may not sell to 'the gaming public', but if the sales of Clancy's books are anything to go by this may be unfounded. Either way, if tactical modern

naval is your field, this is the program you've been waiting for.

*Mike Siggins*

## DRAKKHEN

DESIGNED BY  
**FRANÇOIS MARCELA  
FROIDEVAL**

PUBLISHED BY  
**INFOGRAMES**

PRICE £24.95

GAME PLAY: 7

GRAPHICS: 8

*Available for the Amiga.*

**Drakkhen**, Infogrames's latest release, fits squarely into the computer 'role-playing' game area. At this stage in the genre's development, I suspect (and hope) that the punters are rightly looking for something a little more unusual than straight dungeon delving or city street adventures (basically dungeons with no ceilings) and **Drakkhen**, at least partially, comes up with the goods.

Typically, **Drakkhen**'s basic system is Death & Dreck inspired but altered sufficiently to keep the <sup>TM</sup> lawyers at bay. There are four characters in the party (thus permitting up to four human

players) and these can be named, equipped, dressed and trained in the normal manner. Each character is lumped into a character class and rated for strength, intelligence, dexterity and three other requisites. They also get to collect treasure, equipment, magic items and earn experience for daring deeds. Absolutely nothing new here then.

Where **Drakkhen** differs from its predecessors is the environment used for the adventures. The usual form is for the characters to start in a town or literally at the top of the dungeon steps and the whole game revolves around the various dungeon levels. Some games, such as **Ultima**, offer wider scope by allowing movement in the wilderness and specific quests but in practice this a neat way of separating yet more dungeons, even if some are disguised as caves or castles. Nevertheless, the approach is much preferable to the closed environment of the underground maze.

In **Drakkhen**, the party starts out in the open and can walk around at will, though there is a shark-protected keep nearby which can be entered as the first encounter. As the party move, the scenery scrolls, trees and lakes roll by. The resulting sense of walking towards one's objective is pretty good, and there are

animated monster encounters as well. It is spoilt only by the resemblance, in style and speed, of the background display to those arcade motor racing games where you always seem to be driving towards Mount Fuji. Although I would have preferred rather more subtle (and slower moving) terrain, this is a small price to pay in return for being able to move around freely in what seems to be an extremely large area.

So far so good. Where I start to get peeved is in the regular use of problems and puzzles to impede progress. I know some gamers love this stuff but to me it just gets in the way of exploring and playing, especially when they are very simple like the force fields in the first building. It is an attempt to overlay text adventure systems onto a foreign environment and for me it doesn't work. I suppose the undeniable truth that I'm not very good at solving them is also a factor.

The documentation supplied with the game is well done. There are two booklets, one being a multi language introductory guide and the other a rather plush manual which has some distinctly average fiction and an outline of the magic system, which is quite interesting. The spells are depicted in the manual and on screen as a series of runes and the idea



is that you get to know what effect the runespells have by experiment. There are flowery descriptions of the general effects but no specifics like 'causes 6-36 damage'. So, cure light wounds is in there somewhere but you have to know which runes are correct in the heat of combat. This is a far neater way of using magic than typing in fancy named spells that are always early bazookas or flamethrowers. Why use a charm spell when you can cremate an ogre on the spot?

**Drakkhen** also scores highly on the graphics front. The screen is nicely laid out with pictures of the characters and their current status clearly shown. Their clothes, armour and faces are well rendered adding an individual touch and a good range of weaponry is available. The main, central screen shows the party's view ahead and can be an outside scene or a room within a structure. As one has come to expect from this company, the graphics are extremely good and the result is atmospheric and detailed. The perspective views are particularly effective. The characters can be seen moving about in this key area and it is here that the animated exploration, combat and spell sequences take place. Response to the icon commands is very good and the

persuade and threaten options occasionally tempt a monster to negotiate rather than simply hack the party to bits.

As far as the underlying system goes, I think overall **Drakkhen** fails to make any material advance over **Dungeon Master** and the others but really scores with its 'free range' approach and the sheer size of the place. I have no idea how far the wilderness stretches but I have walked a awful long way in each direction and still seem to find new temples, castles and other settings each time. This is good from the point of view of having bags to explore but bad through not knowing what is out there. It is also hard to map, either mentally or on paper. This all fits with my above reservations about 'puzzle' systems which tend to hinder rather than intrigue. These games are really fantasy wargames rather than true role-playing exercises but **Drakkhen** at least pushes the standard out a little further and makes for a tough game with plenty of scope, graced with those remarkable Infogrames graphics.

Mike Siggins



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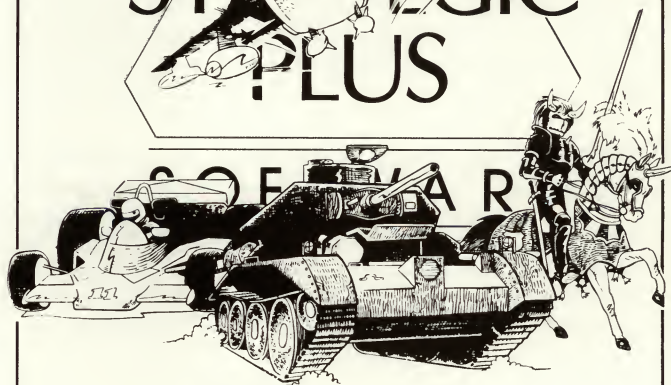
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## SPACE QUEST III: PIRATES OF PESTULON

DESIGNED BY  
MARK CROWE & SCOTT  
MURPHY

PUBLISHED BY  
SIERRA ON-LINE

PRICE £24.95

GAME PLAY: 9

GRAPHICS: 9

*Available for the Amiga.*

It's three-thirty in the morning. I'm cold, tired, jumpy from too much coffee, and bleary-eyed from staring at a computer screen for the last five and a half hours, but it's all worth it – I've just completed *Space Quest III*.

I was determined *not* to like this program. I love adventure games, but I've always been a bit of a purist. I want to see text on my screen; paragraph after paragraph of atmosphere building prose. I can even take the occasional picture thrown in along the way though, having said that, I don't remember ever having been impressed by any of the picture screens in text adventures.

Then came the 'graphic adventure', and up to now I've never even bothered to play one. I reckoned that they were just a sort of halfbreed – an illegitimate mongrel born of an unholy alliance between 'real' adventures and half-baked arcade games.

Boy, have I been wrong! This program is BRILLIANT!

The graphics are super – real cartoon quality stuff in places. The soundtrack has a little digitised speech, some nice sound effects and a musical soundtrack that is the best I have yet encountered in any computer game. Too many games these days churn out the same synthidrum vaguely 'house' trash. The tunes here are atmospheric, and even fun in places.

### WARPED HUMOUR

Speaking of fun, there is a sense of humour running throughout this adventure. Sometimes it's warped, sometimes it's cruel, but it's always funny. If you don't laugh while playing this, there's something wrong with you!



So what's it all about? You play the part of Roger Wilco, drifting through space in a state of suspended animation. Your escape pod is automatically scooped up by a huge automated bin lorry, and your first task is to salvage enough bits of junk to rebuild your ship. This is one of the two parts of the game which had me totally stumped for a while.

If you manage to crack this there are various places to visit, including the Megalith Burger Bar ('Seats a finite number'), World of Wonder (a bit of a tourist trap), and last but not least, Pestulon itself, where your task is to rescue two guys from Andromeda (the authors of the program!).

### FINITE IMPERFECTIONS

Only one or two things prevent this game from being perfect. First, the rather lengthy pause as the computer loads each screen (though rich capitalists who can afford a hard disk needn't worry about this, as the program is easy to install). Secondly, if you're using one disk drive, beware. The on-screen message telling you to reinsert your game disk (after saving your situation to a blank disk) comes up a few seconds before the Amiga has

finished writing to the disk. Remove the disk too soon and you have a 'save' disk which won't load. Believe me, it can be mildly upsetting to have this happen at an advanced stage of the game. If you *do* fall foul of this, try the Diskdoctor. It worked for me.

One last point – the adventure includes three arcade-type sequences. Normally this would be enough to make me wave a crucifix at it and drive a stake through its Read/Write tab, but fear not! After a few attempts these turn out to be rather easy – even my geriatric old fingers could cope with them.

I think you'll like this. I did. A lot.

*John Scott*



## LEISURE SUIT LARRY III: PASSIONATE PATTI IN PURSUIT OF THE PULSATING PECTORALS

DESIGNED BY  
AL LOWE

PUBLISHED BY  
SIERRA ON-LINE

PRICE £39.99

GAME PLAY: 8

GRAPHICS: 8

Available for the PC.

Leisure Suit Larry is a nerd. Despite that, or possibly because of it, he has an awful lot of people trying to help him and showing an unusual degree of interest in his welfare. I am one of those people. Larry brought me back into the world of computer adventure games just three years ago. I had lost interest in science fiction and fantasy after finding that few adventures could match the wit of Infocom's *Hitchhikers' Guide To The Galaxy*.

Then somebody gave me a copy of the first Leisure Suit Larry game (*Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards*). I was hooked at once. I was not the only one. Sonia, my non-gaming wife who feels that working with computers is quite sufficient exposure to their influence, was captivated by the humour of the game.

### BACK TO THE RAUNCH

Barely had we exhausted its possibilities when we began to hear news of a sequel. The second game was more sophisticated but less raunchy than the first. The graphics were more polished and the soundtrack was more melodic. Now we have the third game in the series and there is a marked return to the sexual overtones of the original.

Nor is this the only sense of déjà vu: *Leisure Suit Larry III* opens with Larry being divorced by his native wife. This also means that he loses his job (since he works for his father-in-law) so he starts the game destitute again. The game opening sequence is long and cannot be skipped (except by saving the game at the appropriate point for future restores). It has been suggested that this is because so few people read the credits for the previous games. This may be true but it does make *Leisure Suit Larry III* seem slow



at first. Once the initial slog is complete, however, the game nips along with the usual flair as Larry explores the tropical island.

In an unusual twist this game gives you the opportunity to play either of two characters: you can be our old friend Larry or you can play the part of Patti as she rescues Larry from the Amazons who have captured him.

### ON THE FLAW

Although great pleasure can be gained from the game there are more flaws than its predecessors. The soundtrack is intrusive and no longer provides any useful clues. This may be less of a problem for the fortunate few with music synthesizer cards in their computers.

The scores for the whole game, and for individual actions, are vast (*Leisure Suit Larry II* was scored out of 500. This one is scored out of 4000) which devalues the sense of achievement associated with scoring the points for trivial extras.

An unfortunate side effect of the increased complexity of the game is that responses are often less precise than they were. Finally, and most importantly, I was

horrified to discover that the only way to resolve one problem is to show someone a ticket that does not appear in Larry's inventory.

My indignation at this last weakness arises from a sense of betrayal because Sierra games have always 'played fair' and we have come to trust them. Had this game been published by someone else I would have rated it more highly than I did. Sierra's consistently high standards create an expectation of quality that I simply do not expect other companies to match.

Theo Clarke



## THE HOUND OF SHADOW

DESIGNED BY  
ELDRITCH GAMES

PUBLISHED BY  
ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE £19.99

GAME PLAY: 7

GRAPHICS: 5

*Available for the PC, ST and Amiga.*

As someone who rates the invention of the role-playing game as of similar importance to that of the wheel, I'm always intrigued when a program describes itself as one which at last, finally and definitively, brings true role-playing to the small screen. When the role-playing system in question happens to be my all time favourite, which I always have to referee but never get to *play*, then I know that it's time to beg, steal, buy, borrow, or get a review copy. Yes, this is *Call of Cthulhu* for the computer – a neat character generation system and a cracker of an adventure for Lovecraft fans (those last three words are significant – I'll say more about that later).

You begin by creating a character – the first choice is gender. As with all other aspects of the game, this can be more significant than you might think at first. The game is set in the 1920s and some professions are open only to men. Also certain chauvinist attitudes prevail, as one of my characters found when she ordered a drink in a pub. You can then choose to be Mr, Mrs, Miss, Dr, Prof, Sir, Lord or Lady (but not a Reverend. Pity...). The computer then does a bit of random generation and gives you an outline of your possible character – good or ill health, strong, weak, and so on, and will keep suggesting characters until you find one that you're happy with. Age is also important here – I found that a 65 year old always had loads of experience, but also always had ill-health, or got tired easily. Again, the choice of nationality is important. You can be English or American, and this will help to determine what, if anything, you did during the great war. You can choose how long you spent in the war, and a long war career will bring a lot of extra experience points. Again, the trade off is that with mind and soul weakened by the effects of the horrors of war, you will be more likely to fall prey to the depression, apathy, and pessimism which will come with your growing knowledge of the Cthulhu mythos.

There is quite a wide range of professions to choose from, enabling you to add more specialised skills to your character's basic profile. You then come to the most important part of generating your character as you move through seven skill types.

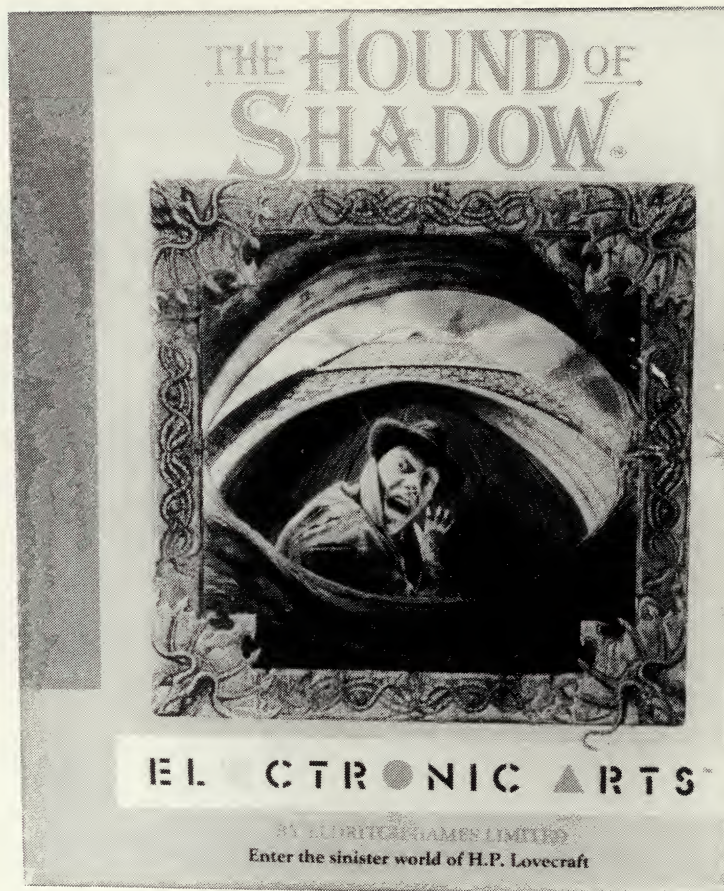
One of the real beauties of this game is that the skills do make a difference as the story unfolds. When my professor of anthropology attended a seance, he immediately knew that it was bogus – no genuine Hindu would wear a turban like that, and the assistant's outfit was another giveaway! Again, when Lady Charlotte Holmes, my psychic investigator, visited an occult bookshop, her high level of occult knowledge made it instantly clear that only 'serious' occult books were on sale.

### BARKING MAD

One skill which is necessary, but deadly, is the 'corrupt knowledge' skill. Those who have played *Call of Cthulhu* will know that as your knowledge of the Unspeakably Horrible Things That Should Not Be increases, your sanity decreases. *Hound of Shadow* preserves that feature, but at no time will the computer let you know just how deeply your character has been affected. You tend to get this feedback from the way other characters relate to you. When Lady Charlotte first used

the British Museum Library, there was no problem – no one gave her so much as a second glance. However after she had witnessed the victim of a gory supernatural murder, read the dread *Nameless Cults* a few times, and even (shudder) made use of its depraved secrets, things changed. The next time she went to the library, the clerk gave her an Oh-My-God-What's-Happened-To-Her kind of look. According to the manual these effects won't be too great a problem in this game, but as characters move through the promised sequels to *Hound of Shadow* the subtle effects of corruption and despair will begin to take hold.

So you've created your character. What's the adventure like? Sad to say, this is where the problems start. I'm not going to give any more of the storyline away than I already have, but it does get off to a promising start. The text is descriptive, atmosphere-building, and just about perfect for a 1920s Lovecraft adventure. In the early stages, it is vital to always be in the right place at the right time, but this isn't a problem, as computer characters help you quite a bit. You'll be into things quicker than a speeding silver bullet. Then you'll hit the problem – the one that will bring you to a dead halt and leave you wringing your neck in frustration – *Hound of Shadow* has one of the worst parsers I have seen in an adventure game





for a long, long time. You'll go through phases where, whatever you try to do, you'll be told nonsense such as 'It's not here', 'You see nothing interesting' ad infinitum.

This is always annoying, but in **Hound of Shadow** it can be annoying *and* damn misleading. Picture: you are in the library. On your desk is a book. You *know* that the book contains vital information. Now, you might think that 'Read Book' would seem like a reasonable command to enter. Do this in **Hound of Shadow** and you may well be told that you see nothing interesting. Lies! Now type 'Read' followed by the name of the book, and you will get the info you need. This is inexcusable in an adventure written in 1989.

Adventure games should be a challenge because of problems of logic and deduction, *not* because you have to be lucky enough to hit on the one word that the parser will understand.

I said above that this was a must for *Lovecraft fans*. Speaking as one myself, I've had a lot of fun with this program. Perhaps the reason I'm so annoyed is that I love the subject matter so much, and I hate to see what I honestly believe *could* have been one of the all time classic adventures ruined for want of a little more care.

All the graphics in the game are done in a sepia tone, obviously intended to evoke old photographs. Some of the shots are

better than others, but apart from the one(?) which apparently contains a clue, they add nothing to the game. (No graphics and a better parser would have been a good idea, grumble, grouse). Not is there any sound at all – a shame, for if ever an adventure cried out for a spooky musical soundtrack, this is it.

As a postscript: if anyone out there has played the game and has got any further than *Nameless Cults* and Father Paul Mason (*That name rings a bell* – Ed), please let me know, as I am stuck, and losing sanity points at an alarming rate!

John Scott

## NOBUNAGA'S AMBITION

DESIGNED BY  
KOU SHIBUSAWA

PUBLISHED BY  
THE KOEI CORPORATION

PRICE £39.99 (IMPORT)

GAME PLAY: 10

GRAPHICS: 8

Available for the PC.

It's strange to be writing about a game in these columns that was first published in 1981. Even stranger is that, despite quantum leaps in technology, it is still one of the best strategy games around. What's more it has never had a UK release! The game focuses on one of the most fascinating (at least for games companies) periods of Japanese history; the 'warring states' period which lasted from 1467 to the unification in 1590. Many have tried, though none have come as close as this to capturing (in game terms) both the flavour and drama of that period. That it does so in such a simple and elegant way is simply the icing on the cake.

### NOTHING LIKE A DAIM YOI

Like most games dealing with this period the object is territorial conquest. You start off with one fief and must try to control 17 or 51 depending on the scenario. Your turn consists simply of issuing one command per fief owned. Perhaps 'simply' is something of a misnomer; there is nothing simple about the decisions involved. For one thing, there are 21 command options, and secondly, wherever you

pitch your tent you will find yourself surrounded by daimyos of a decidedly psychopathic bent, who will attack you with the same impartiality as they attack each other. When such an assault occurs the screen reverts to a tactical display, which, as a bonus, simulates the terrain of the actual province at the time. This is overlaid with a hex grid, and virtually provides a game within a game as you attempt to conquer or defend the fief. If you lose the battle and the daimyo (in other words, you) is killed then the game is over, as the screen will clinically inform you.

### THE MERCHANT OF MUTSU

The main display consists of a territorial map along with the names of the daimyos in possession. To the right is your character profile showing your age, charm, ambition, luck, and IQ. The parameters for these are determined in what has become known in our group as the 'one arm bandit phase'. For each attribute, the numbers flash with the speed of a Vegas vendor stopping only when you hit the space bar. You are allowed multiple attempts but there is no jackpot at the end of the rainbow, for when one changes they all change. The rule book suggests that you try to get all your characteristics over 80. Through the course of the game these will change according to the successes and failures of your actions.

The command phase is where the game is won and lost, though fate plays a large hand too. In addition to building armies, you must manage your fief efficiently. This means cultivating the fields, expanding the towns, and setting a profitable tax rate. The latter can cause a 'peasant revolt'; however, if you throw some rice or gold at them (the 'give' command),

they'll usually calm down. Of course to do all these things you're going to need cash, or in this case gold. This is where the merchant comes in. When he's in town, which is not always, he'll lend you cash at an extortionate interest rate. Far better to take advantage of the trading opportunities the game offers and flog him some rice. It's also possible to instigate diplomacy and non-aggression pacts (highly recommended).

Apart from being a game of strategy, **Nobunaga's Ambition** is also a simulation so there is little attempt at play balance. The strengths and weaknesses of the fiefs represent those of the period according to available data. So if a particular daimyo keeps attacking you, it's nothing personal, he's just doing what his ancestor did. The game can take up to eight players, but I would suggest the optimum number (apart from solitaire) is four starting with two fiefs each, for this is an elimination game with a vengeance; you can even be knocked out on the first turn!

The beautifully written manual complements the game perfectly and offers some useful strategy hints. The 123 pages it contains is not an indication of complexity, but of commendable attention to detail; much of the book is taken up with fascinating historical notes and potted biographies of all the daimyos involved. Like many of the best games, **Nobunaga's Ambition** functions simply, leaving the players to concentrate their minds on strategy. And concentrate you will have to for this a tough game to win, or even to stay alive in. But, as the saying goes: 'when the going gets tough . . .'

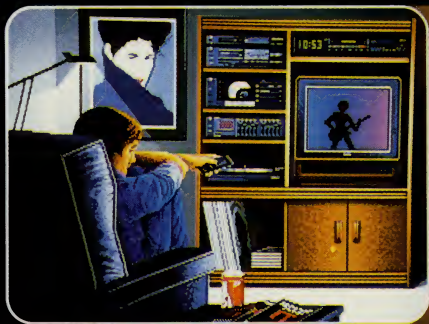
Well, what are you waiting for?

Brian Walker



# Ultima VI

## The False Prophet



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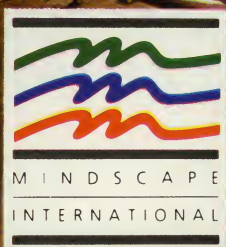
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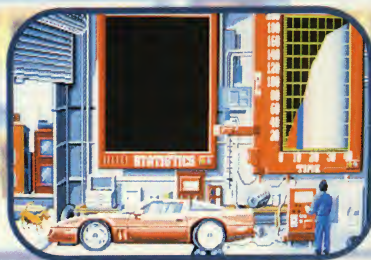
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## TV SPORTS BASKETBALL

DESIGNED BY  
LARRY GARNER

PUBLISHED BY  
CINEMAWARE/MIRRORSOFT

PRICE £29.95

GAME PLAY: 8

GRAPHICS: 9

*Available for the Amiga.*

In this, the latest of Cinemaware's TV Sports series, the company seemed to have adopted the maxim 'never change a winning team'. Given the amazing success of **TV Sports Football**, one can hardly blame them. The up side of this formula is that **TV Sports Basketball** contains the slick graphics and arcade strategy options of its predecessor. The down side is that the manual is again inexplicably vague, especially in its attempts at explaining the various commands and controls. Descriptions of what exactly you can do (and how to access them) are not readily discernible. Most of the information appears to be buried deep in explanatory paragraphs. As a result, the rules are badly in need of a summary sheet. Even when you do track down the command it doesn't always work. For instance, I have yet to succeed in making a substitution during a time out. Also, can anyone tell me how to double team a player?

### COLEMAN CALLS

The game provides options to play one-off exhibition games, or in a league with human or computer controlled teams. **TV Sports Basketball** looks and plays very much like the Football game in that the teams have realistic names but fictional players, which I suspect, is due to the prohibitive licence fees demanded by the NBA. A long, hard task is ahead if your wish to edit all the players and their stats to emulate your favourite teams. The games can be set to varying length of play (from ten minutes to a 48 minute full game) and the number of players can be reduced down to two per side. This latter feature strikes me as being of rather dubious use.

The program starts off with the usual preamble including the now famous TV commentator sequence which still manages to amaze me. Having chosen the teams and set the parameters for play, it's over to the tip-off. From here on in the

game play is carried along by the top-notch graphics. The ten players run around with something approaching real-life movement and speed. All the action sequences like steals, rebounding, blocked shots and dunks are superbly done. Sometimes the action is *so* fast that the variable speed action replay feature has to be called in. This is a neat touch. If asked whether it works, I'd have to say yes. It looks right, the teams play believable man to man and zone defence, the player moves look spot on, fatigue and shooting streaks are catered for and the scores over a full game work out correctly.

### BASKET CASE

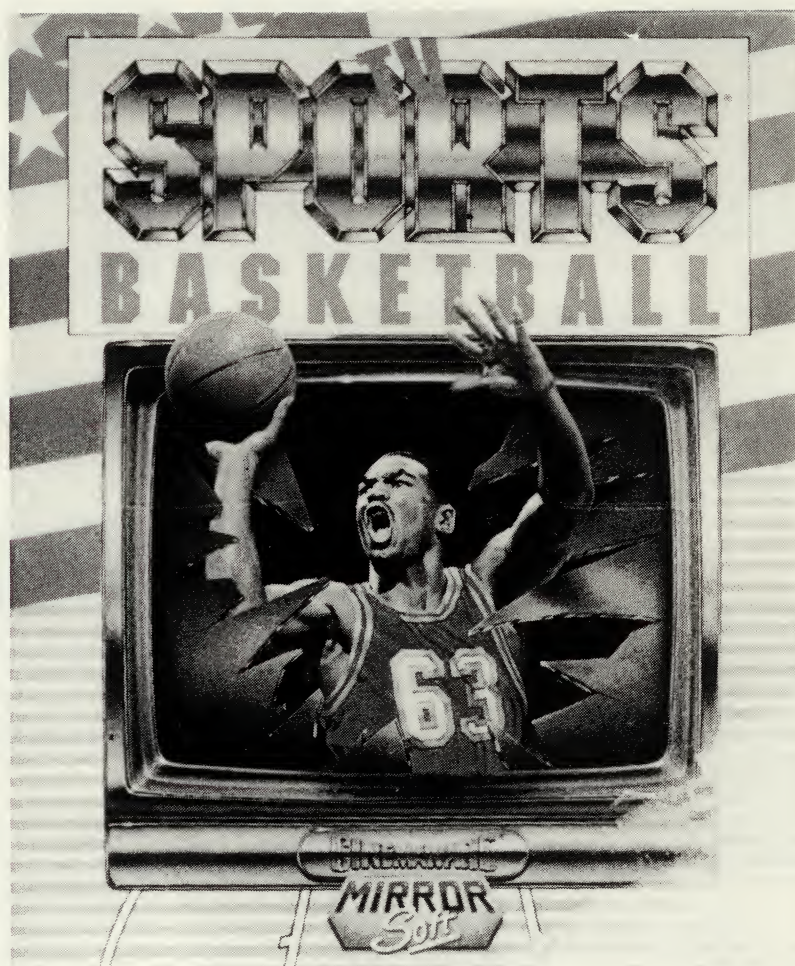
The human players use a joystick to control just one player on the screen but the game can be set to run in two modes: role-playing or normal. In the former, the controlled player (who has a darker shirt than the others and so is easily identified) plays a playmaking guard role; that is, he dribbles the ball up the court, makes the defence splitting passes and scores a few points from time to time. The best analogy is with a soccer midfield general. The player is quite easy to control, he makes passes at the touch of the button and when he doesn't have possession one is free to screen, block or rebound at will. The

trouble is, the other four players get most of the exciting stuff to do like the long range jumpshots, the slamdunks and the tip-ins. The strong feeling in this mode is wanting to be under the basket where it's all happening. The way to do this is to select the alternative mode where you get to control whichever player has the ball. This is less realistic but makes for a much more exciting game as you get to pass to yourself and shoot as well.

The best option is for two players to take a joystick each and control one player on each side. This at least adds some competition and the games can be close. As another option, two players can combine to take on the computer as teammates and this works a little better. Rounding out the options is the strategy game. This is pretty lightweight, usually you end up simply watching the game and making the occasional substitution.

Compared to **Omni-Play Basketball** that I reviewed in GI#11, **TV Sports** is much more like the real thing. Ultimately though, it doesn't quite recreate the speed and excitement of a real game. However, there is sufficient variety and structure to make this a game worth persevering with. Just don't expect a classic.

*Mike Siggins*





## THE COLONEL'S BEQUEST

DESIGNED BY  
ROBERTA WILLIAMS

PUBLISHED BY  
SIERRA ON-LINE

PRICE £39.99

GAME PLAY: 8

GRAPHICS: 8

Available for the PC.

'Where's the score?' asked a colleague coming to see what I was doing.

'It's not that type of game . . .' I started to explain, and a curious memory came to me: this was the kind of conversation that I used to have about role-playing games with my board gaming friends fifteen years ago! Could I be in at the start of a development of similar importance?

Roberta Williams and her husband Ken started Sierra On-line about a decade ago. She was one of the first people to add graphic images to text adventure games. Her first game of this type was a gothic murder mystery (*Mystery House* for the Apple I in 1979) but she really became famous for her fantasy adventure series *King's Quest*. *King's Quest* was the first adventure game in which characters could move in front of and behind objects in the scene. Sierra called this technique '3-D Animated Adventure' and their innovative use of graphics marked out their products in the US market. *King's Quest* now runs to five games.

Recently I was talking to a computer consultant in a pub. The conversation turned to games and he mentioned *King's Quest*: 'They're written by a nutty American hippy woman who doesn't like violence,' he observed. 'So our hero plods around the country chatting to monsters.' The description is unfair but it is true that Roberta Williams prefers her games to avoid combat and has long said that she wants to write 'interactive entertainment' rather than games. *The Colonel's Bequest* realises that objective.

The theme reverts to the 'mansion murder' concept of *Mystery House*. This is solid genre stuff. It is 1926 and Laura Bow, the 20 year old daughter of a New Orleans Police detective, is taken to spend a weekend at a mansion on a private island in the bayou. Her fiend Lillian has been invited to a family reunion by her aged uncle, Colonel Henri Dijon. At

dinner on the first night the eponymous colonel announces that he has bequeathed his wealth to be split equally between each of the people in the room who is alive at the time of his demise. Laura is the only exception to this bequest.

All of this is explained in a long animated introduction. The game is presented in the form of a stage show and control is passed to the player at this stage of Act I (7:00pm on Friday). Laura can now wander around, looking at things and talking to other characters. Conversations largely consist of instructions like 'Ask Fifi about Lillian' and 'Tell Fifi about rifle' but we can also show objects to people. The Acts are sliced up into various time slices within which the other characters' behaviour is fixed. The game moves on to the next time slice when Laura starts certain events (we move to the second slice when Laura enters any one of a few rooms) and the transition is indicated by the sound of the clock striking and a brief display of the clock face.

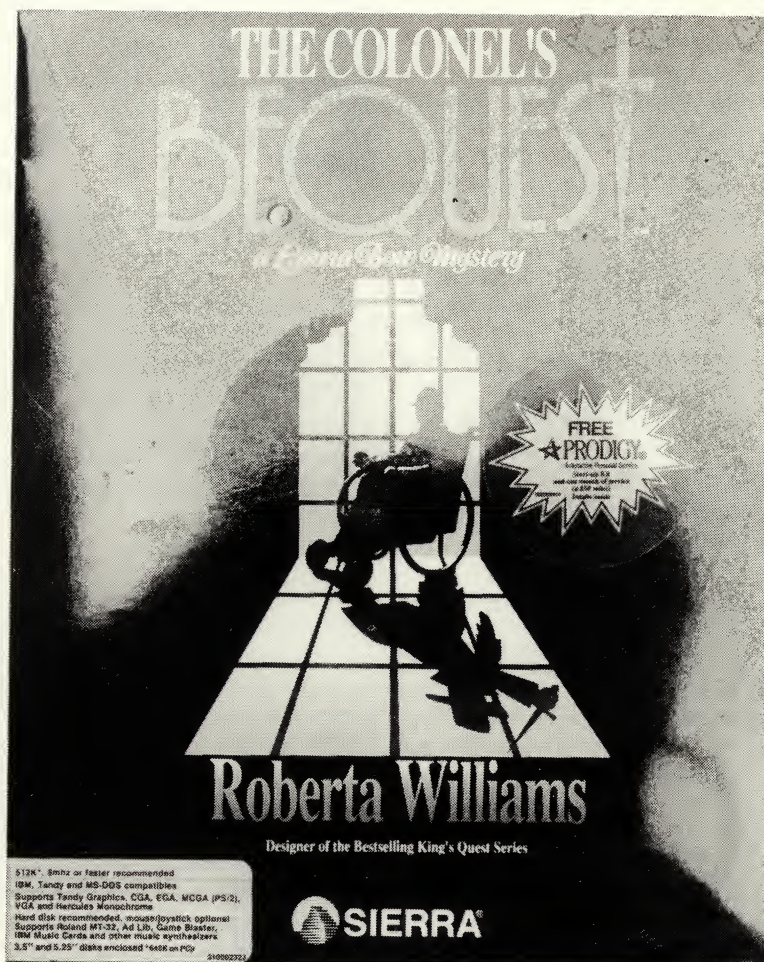
It is at this stage that the unusual nature of this game becomes apparent. If you just sit Laura somewhere small actions will happen without you doing anything. You could just stay in the bedroom and (eventually) Ethel and Lillian will come in and chat. Of course, nothing more will

happen until you move into one of the key rooms but that is not the obstructive puzzle that you find in conventional adventure games. It is possible to amble through all eight acts of the story without analysing the mystery at all. Such an approach is not very rewarding but it serves to demonstrate the essential difference between this and the other games.

Once I had recognised this difference and adjusted my attitude I was entranced. The nature of the game is such that murder mystery novel readers will like it a lot but computer game players may find things too undirected for their taste. The game does have its flaws (the unidentified object on the floor that defies description and the occasional inconsistency when characters appear to vanish off-screen are notable examples) but they are trivial when one considers the overall attention to detail.

I have found all of the Sierra games quite obsessive but *The Colonel's Bequest* has a charm all of its own. Ah, excuse me, I must go now – I hear a disturbance in the library . . .

Theo Clarke





## SSI

The big news from this exciting company is that they are to do a software conversion of the FASA Corp's **Interceptor** from the Renegade Legion series. Due the end of May, PC first.

**Pools of Radiance** on the Amiga should be available in the UK soon, as should **Overrun**, and **Sword of Aragon**. **Typhoon of Steel** and **Storm Across Europe** were both farmed out for Amiga conversion but unfortunately the programmer made a botch of things resulting in a delayed release of both products, though the latter should be available for the PC soon.

Coming even sooner on the PC is **Second Front** – division level strategic game of the war in Russia which covers the entire front. All these games will be available in the UK through US Gold, which brings us nicely to . . .

## US Gold

Here is the news from Birmingham. Britain's 'second city' is about to get a hit by a nuclear Bomb. Yes, we know. You thought it already had been. But this particular missile will be aimed solely at Amiga owners; we refer, of course, to the conversion of **Nuclear War** – a card game in the best possible taste, which has been out for some time now in the US on the New World Computing label. US Gold have signed a distribution deal with this company, which also means that another old favourite will be hitting these shores shortly; no less an antique than Ken St Andre's **Tunnels and Trolls** is about to become a block off the the old chip. The first adventure, to be released later this year, will be **Crusaders of Khan**.

US Gold will also be releasing the highly rated **Might and Magic 2** very shortly.

## Microprose

Mussolini managed it, but British Rail can't. This summer you'll have *your* chance to get the trains to run on time when Microprose launch **Sid (Pirates)** Meier's **Railroad Tycoon**. First reports suggest a cross between **Sim City** and the **1829** boardgame. Due any day now is **Midwinter**, a global strategy game which takes in current environmental concerns. Comes with a greenhouse (for effect), and the kitchen sink.

If **Midwinter** is a bit cool, then howsabout **Fire & Brimstone** – a wondrous

# BITS

story, set in Norseville, of a journey into 'the very depths of evil' featuring Thor (who else?). Thor is a 'man with a mission'. He has been selected to attempt the 'near impossible'. Namely, to try to make a derivative adventure tale appear original. Will he succeed? Only time will tell.

## Believe it or what

Following the successful conversion of GDW's miniature rules set **Harpoon**, the same company are to license their classic American Civil War game **A House Divided** for software conversion. Tevex are the lucky recipients of this deal. Programmer Steve (**Incanbula**) Estvanik is said to be working on it *at this very minute!* Also coming soon to a computer near you will be GDW's **Megatraveller**. The first release in a series will be **The Zhodani Conspiracy**, brought to you by Paragon (PG certificate).

## Mindscape

Great news for ST owners! **Fire Brigade** from Panther Games is now available for your machine, which preferably should be at least a 1040. The game will run with 520K ram but only in two colours. Owners of 1040s and up get four colours. No real problem as the key thing here is the gameplay which **Fire Brigade** has in abundance. Nice too to see the Aussies at Panther have a sense of humour; if you try to load in low resolution the following message appears: 'This game will only run in medium or high rez – Bollocks'.

Due out soon for the PC is Chris (**Balance of Power**) Crawford's **Guns and Butter**, described as 'the ideal tool for examining the implications of modern macroeconomic and geopolitical theories'. Would you Adam and Eve it?

If you're not an egghead then what about some 'radioactive arcade action'. Could this be a sort of software solarium? You can find out when you play **Bad Blood**, the latest release from Origin which takes place in a world devastated by a nuclear holocaust and vindaloo curries. Survivors of the catastrophe now struggle for their very existence in a world without loo paper.

Another Origin release is **Ultima VI: The False Prophet**. In this new adventure the realm of Britannia is attacked by an evil race of horrifying gargoyles. There are also 'hundreds of unique and interesting characters to speak with'. Unlike like the staff of this magazine, 'each one is capable of sophisticated, interactive conversations'.

## Accolade

It's golden oldies time at Accolade. Four of the best selling titles appear on the compilation 'Accolade's All-Time Favourites'. **Test Drive**, **Mean 18**, **Famous Courses** (Vol 1 & 11), and **Hardball**, make up the first compo for the ST and Amiga. The follow up to **Hardball** is **Hardball 2** (how do they think of these things?) which adds league play, stats, and a choice of seven stadiums to a game that was already regarded as a classic of its kind. How come the Yanks make all the best sports games? G

## CHARTS

### Computer Games

- ① **Space Rogue** (Origin/Mindscape) AM, PC, C64
- ② **688 Attack Sub** (Electronic Arts) Amiga.
- ③ **Harpoon** (360/Mirrorsoft) PC.
- ④ **Champions of Krynn** (SSI/US Gold) PC, C64.
- ⑤ **Knights of Legend** (Origin/Mindscape) PC, C64.
- ⑥ **Dragon Wars** (Electronic Arts) PC, C64.
- ⑦ **Dragon's Breath** (Palace) AM.
- ⑧ **Breach 2** (Omnitrend) All formats.
- ⑨ **Storm Across Europe** (SSI/US Gold) C64.
- ⑩ **Conquerer** (Rainbow Arts) All formats.

Chart supplied by Strategic Plus Software, PO Box 8, Hampton, Middx TW12 3XA.



## LETTERS

## REBOUND

## Wise counsel

I was appalled to read in last month's GI that your writer Philip Murphy is living in a council house. Can't you afford to pay him a salary that will enable him to buy a house more appropriate to his status?

## W Kalber

Acton, London W3 0NL

*Prior to starting work for this magazine, 'Gypsy Phil' was living in a caravan site off the M4 motorway. However, thanks to the generosity of this magazine he was able to purchase one of those houses being sold off by the government, which the rest of the population had already paid for.*

## Wishful thinking

As Olton's leading authority on board games, I felt that, with my years of experience in the games industry, you would welcome my comments on your organ. Well, I think your mag's triffic.

Your Sniper article in GI #11 has inspired me to design a new game called 'Who Topped Brian Walker?' The problem is I have designed it for 2-6 players, but there are only five suspects in the article. I was wondering therefore if you would review one of my games and give it the panning it no doubt deserves. This would give me the sixth suspect for the game and fulfil my other ambition which is to appear in one of my own games.

## Nick Sewell

Olton, West Midlands B92 7RP

## Delayed action

Thank you for publishing a review of the 8th Army boardgame in your August issue.

I would like to be credited with the design of 8th Army, which I produced in 1982. I was asked to design a game on the North Africa campaign 1940-1943. One of the restrictions was a maximum 100 counter limit which meant not printing unit identification on the counters.

The structure of the rules layout is Malcolm Watson's idea: it assists a novice but does not make for easy reference.

I would like to thank your reviewer for a fair assessment of the game and hope that

you can publish this letter in a future issue of *Games International*.

## Shaun Carter

Bolton, Lancs BL2 6PL

## Rich and famous

Much as I abhor sycophantic letters to magazines, I must say that your magazine is, for me, the finest ever (How's that for 'fawning on the rich famous' - my dictionary's definition of sycophantic). Waiting for each issue recalls the anticipation felt whilst awaiting early issues of *Games & Puzzles* and other, amateur, mags that have appeared over the years. So please keep GI coming; for the general games aficionado it is unique and I suspect I am not alone amongst your readers in considering content and continued existence of more importance than price!

To amplify a suggestion made in my 'Reader's Revenge' ie more reviews of existing games - I envisage that this could take a variety of forms:

1. Details of games about to be deleted by various games companies - Obituaries! This could help readers to pick up games that particularly interest them and also avoid them missing an occasional gem. For instance I believe Ravensburger are deleting *Metropolis*, a superb Sid Sackson game.

2. Reviews of the current lists of various games companies with the turkeys included as well as the good uns. I am sure your contributors have sufficient knowledge of most games between them for excellent and useful articles.

3. Reviews of games advertised in GI. I know some are reviewed but is the lack of even a mini-review a coded message meaning 'don't touch with a barge pole?' I would like to support advertisers to GI but bought *Save the President* from an advert in another magazine. Say no more!

Another suggestion relates to readers' games. I am certain that many (all?) of your readers have invented games and not been masochistic enough to try to sell or publish them. This does not mean that some are not good games and it seems to me that a series of readers' games with sufficient detail to enable them to be made up and played would have many advantages:

1. I believe many inventors would just enjoy seeing their games published, particularly to a select and knowledgeable audience, ie immortality rather than the one in a million instant millionaire à la *Trivial Pursuit*.

2. Wider play testing would lead to improvements and, who knows, the more enterprising games manufacturers could eventually discover a source of games to publish! Years ago I made up a game called *Election* by, I think, a Mr Mitchell from Hull that appeared in *Games & Puzzles* and whilst simple and definitely not a *Die Macher* it was excellent. Even though it is not from a reader, how about trying for *Energie Poker* for a start - from your recent article it sounds excellent.

## Martin Leathwood

Duckhole, Avon BS12 1LD

*Our dictionary describes a sycophant as a 'servile flatterer' - vital characteristics if you wish to get a letter published in this magazine. Regarding your suggestions: unfortunately games companies (but not software houses) provide us with little information about their current products, let alone games they are deleting. Sid Sackson's *Metropolis* was deleted by Ravensburger about three years ago, while the same company's excellent *Wildlife Adventure* went the same way last year. We do intend to cover games still in print but not as part of our review section. For example, Jonathan Turner will shortly be starting a series looking at existing games in a rather unusual context. Publishing the rules to out of print games is an excellent idea but fraught with copyright problems. When a game disappears from a company's line, the rights revert back to the 'author'. Even if we were to track them down, there is no guarantee that they would agree to our publishing the rules. If readers really want a particular game, they should try our free classified column where we understand the success rate is quite high.* GI

Write to: Games International,  
Lamerton House, 23a High  
Street, Ealing, London W5 5DF

Or Fax: 01-579 6485



# Free classifieds

GI classified ads are free to private individuals, £1/word to commercial organisations.

**WANTED DEPERATELY:** Election, Stockbroker (Intellect), Jolly Roger (IT), Malloso (Casper Games), Warlock magazine (GW), Aviation (Gibsons), Stack (B B Game), World War 2 (Usborne Publ). Rudolf Rühle, Burgweg 33, D-5300 Bonn 1, West Germany.

**MINIATURE WARGAMES** magazines. Complete lot only £55, in W H Smith binders 1-20, 21-40, 41-53 plus 61 and 71. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 01-337 0608 after 7pm.

**ASLAN** - the magazine for the serious rolegamer: reviews, campaign reports, ideas, discussion and lots and lots of letters. #8 (with original Bryan Talbot cover) out now, £1.20. #6 and #7 still available, £1 each. Or all 3 for £2.50! From Andrew Rillstone, 10 Marlborough Grove, Fishergate, York.

## 3 NEW BOARD GAMES

Launch Oct 1990. Small investment required in return for a piece of the action.

For further details contact Tony or David at Martone, Excell Print, St Michael's Works, Aldham Rd, Hadleigh, Ipswich, Suffolk IP7 6BJ, ☎ 823262.

**WANTED** desperately Vultures and other Henry games. Mike Siggins, 129 Ardmore Lane, Buckhurst Hill, Essex IG9 5SB.

**WANTED:** Monopoly (Leeds streets) and pre-1960 editions. also Hancock's Half Hour game. Chris, ☎ 0905 420297.

**PLAYERS WANTED** for role-playing and wargames in Leatherhead. Many games played: AD&D, Ars Magica, Leviathan, SFB etc. Ideally 18+ years old. Jeff, ☎ 0372 375202 (nights) or, 01-940 8444 ext 210 (days).

**DESPERATELY SEEKING** Tales of the Arabian Nights (West End boardgame). Will pay any reasonable price for complete game, condition not important. Jan Perfect, Box Hill School, Mickleham, Surrey RH5 6EA. ☎ 0372 379392.

**WHITE DWARF** back issues for sale (offers). Will sell separately #s 28, 32, 34 to 44, 60, 63, 66 to 69, 71, 72, 74 to 80 and 113. White Dwarf Scenarios and Scenarios volume III (the pair) £2. Back issues in W H Smith binders complete only: 81 to 92 and 93 to 104. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 01-337 0608 after 7pm.

**UNUSED BOARD GAMES** for sale: Cry Havoc (Standard Games) £6, Superpower (Games Workshop) £8, Arnheim Bridge, 8th Army, Victory at Waterloo (Attactix) £5 each. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 01-337 0608 after 7pm.

## SPIELBOX

Bi-monthly German language games review magazine. Send DM 54,- (plus DM 9,80 if you want it sent air mail) for a one year - six issue - subscription to: Huss-Verlag GmbH, Joseph-Dollinger-Bogen 5, Postfach 46 04 80, D-8000 München 46, West Germany.

**UNUSED ROLEGAME:** Bushido boxed set £7.50. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 01-337 0608 after 7pm.

**WANTED:** Energize Poker, Apocalypse, Trade and Thomas Tour. CASH PAID. Also games for sale, send SAE for list. I would also be interested to hear from anyone interested in games in the Anglesey or N Wales area. Mervyn, ☎ 0407 720895.

**WANTED:** Cosmic Encounter Expansion sets 4 and 8. Tom, ☎ 0895 74000 xtn 2285 business hours.

## COMPUTER GAMES WANTED

Microprose's Command Decision series (Crusade In Europe, Conflict In Vietnam and Decision In the Desert) for the IBM PC. Contact Games International, Lamerton House, 23a High St, Ealing, London W5 5DF.

**ROLE-PLAYING** playtesters required (NOT D&D/Warhammer) aged 18+, with imagination. Acton area, evenings/weekends. Graham, ☎ 993 0107.

**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** Job lot, £15: basic rules set 1; modules B4 The Lost City, N1 Against The Cult of the Reptile God, S2 White Plume Mountain, I2 Tomb of the Lizard King; The Rogues Gallery; Dungeons and Geomorphs set 2; Monster & Treasure Assortment set 3. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 01-337 0608 after 7pm.

**WARHAMMER** mint condition bargain: the lot £50. Hardback - Fantasy Role-play rules book; boxed - Fantasy Battle rules; boxed - Blood on the Streets; boxed - Terror of the Lichmaster; boxed - Death on the Reik; The Enemy Within; Shadows Over Bogenhafen. All as new and buildings unmade up. Will not split. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 01-337 0608 after 7pm.

**IMAGINE** magazine issues 1-5 mint condition £5 the lot only. Also Adventurer magazine, complete lot only £15, issues one to 11 in W H Smith binder. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 01-337 0608 after 7pm.

**SECONDHAND GAMES!** Bought, sold or part exchanged. Send SAE for list of over 100 games to: Jim Crawford, 11 Canon Court, Nevendon, Basildon, Essex. ☎ 0268 534002.

**WANTED.** Orion (Parker Bros, 1977). Old puzzles: Think-a-dot, Twiddle, Anchor stone puzzles, Instant Insanity/Tantaliser puzzles, puzzle boxes, Wit's End, Meba, Game Jugo, etc. Non-standard Rubik Cubes. Books on puzzles and mathematical recreations, etc. David Singmaster, 87 Rodenhurst Road, London SW4 8AF. ☎ 01-674 3674.

**WANTED:** Warlord/Apocalypse. ☎ 01-304 6146.

## GAMES REPS

Wanted for all areas. Send cv to: Michael Callaghan, Chart Hobby Ltd, Chart House, Station Road, East Preston, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN16 3AG.

**ODDMENTS:** Brand new Ian Livingstone Casket of Souls £1.50, 2nd and 3rd Citadel Compendium (the pair) £2, Citadel Journals Autumn 85 and Spring 87 (the pair) £2, Judges Guild Fantastic Wilderlands Beyond No 67 £2.50. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 01-337 0608 after 7pm.

**VERY EARLY MONOPOLY** set for sale (cardboard, not metal playing pieces!) in near mint condition. Unfortunately no board - components were packaged separately. Offers? Also Escape From Colditz, Parker (£8); Railroader, Waddingtons 1963 (£15); Poleconomy (New Zealand edition), World Games (£10); Go (oriental game), Ariel (£5); Aviation, ?, complete but no rules (£5). Prices exclude P&P. Paul Jeffries, 46 Towncourt Lane, Petts Wood, Kent BR5 1EH. ☎ 0689 34454.

## REDUCED PRICES

Due to transit damage we have a number of games in wounded boxes, the games themselves are complete. These are available post-paid at Retail Price less 25%. Avalon Hill, Victory, FASA and Columbia titles only. For details, ☎ 0903 773170.

**ECW WARGAME:** The King's War covering the ECW 1642-46. 44 page A4 rules booklet. 18" x 23.5" map, 7 scenarios and 9 counter sheets (you cut and paste). Already sold in excess of 700 copies. £6 post free UK (£7 surface mail) from Charles Vasey, 75 Richmond Park Road, East Sheen, London SW14 8JY.

**USUTHU!** The Battle of Rorkes's Drift. £8.95 plus £1.05 P&P, from Valhalla Games, 19 Luke Road, Droylsden, Manchester M35 4FE.

**WANTED TSR Gangbuster** modules from Number GB6 (were there any?), Avalon Hill Down with the King (must be guaranteed complete), Sleuth Publications Consulting Detective, The Queens Park Affair. Fair prices paid. Must be in good condition. ☎ 01-337 0608 after 7pm.

**HELP!** Just acquired old game (Spears, perhaps) Amoeba via car boot sale but with no rule book. Can anyone tell me anything about this game and/or send me a copy of the rules? Malcolm Smith, Statsråd Ihlensvei 66B, N-2010 Strømmen, Norway.

**WANTED DESPERATELY:** Mediterranean (Parker Brothers); Blackfeet, Project KGB (Waddingtons); Election, Stockbroker (Intellect); Boxcars (Erickson); Saga (Erikson); Collect (Stanley Gibbons); Contraband (Pepys); Space 1999, Juggernaut (Omnia), Battle of Britain, L'Attaque, Tri-tactics (Gibsons); Battle for Britain, Reach the Summit (Berwick); O.R.B.I.T. (Lazy Days), Wild Life (Spears); Issues of Games & Puzzles. Will buy or trade. Alan R Moon, 15 Burnside St, Lancaster NH 03584. ☎ (603) 788 3818.

**BOARD GAMES** players wanted in Bridgnorth area. Will play anything. Games club has recently been formed, new members required for expansion. Contact Mark Kennett, 3 Wardle Close, Bridgnorth, Shropshire. ☎ 0746 761454.

**JUDGES GUILD.** The lot £12.50: City-State of the Invincible Overlord, Wilderlands of High Fantasy, Fantastic Wilderlands Beyond. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 01-337 0608 after 7pm.

## NOT JUST RAILWAY RIVALS!

Peninsular War, Pirate Island and Slick! will soon be joined by Bus Boss, Winchester and Send! in the Rostherne Range; and, of course, even more new RR maps. At all the best specialist games shops, or direct by post: latest details free and post free. Rostherne Games, 102 Priory Rd, Milford Haven SA73 2ED. New number: ☎ 0646 692752.

## CONVENTION DIARY

### UK

**SENTINEL 90.** April 8, 1990 at the King's Hall, Stoke-on-Trent from 10am to 6pm. Wargames and rolegames, trade stalls, participation games and competitions, bring and buy. Organised by the Stoke Wargames Group. Contact P Neale, 6 Emery Avenue, Newcastle, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs ST5 2JF.

**BAYCON.** April 13-15, 1990 at a hotel in the Exeter area. Residential boardgame convention in pleasant surroundings. Victor Ludorum tournament (sponsored by GI) and Britannia tournament. For more details contact Bob Mulholland, 16 Codrington St, Newtown, Exeter EX1 2BU.

**CAMPAIGN 90.** May 12 and 13, 1990 at Woughton Campus, Milton Keynes. Warhammer, Warhammer 40K and Blood Bowl championships. Contact M A Kay, 117 St Johns Road, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK3 5DZ.

**BEER & PRETZELS** Board Games Weekend, May 19 and 20, at the Heritage Brewery Museum, Anglesey Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. All kind of games, in an establishment with beer brewed on the premises. £4 for two days or £2.50 per day. B&B can be arranged if booked in advance. Contact Spirit Games, 98 Station St, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. ☎ 0283 511293 or 0283 34801 (evenings).



**MANORCON 90.** July 20-23, 1990 at High Hall, Birmingham University. Boardgame convention featuring the National Team Diplomacy Championship and other tournaments. Convention fee £5 or £2 per day. Accommodation available. Contact Richard Walkerdine, 13 Offley Road, Hitchin, Herts SG5 2AZ.

**CONJUNCTION.** July 27-29, 1990 at New Hall College, Cambridge. Relaxed rolegame convention organised like an SF con rather than a selling exercise. Guest of Honour Greg Stafford. Talks, workshops games etc. £12 attending, B&B £21.50, £5 supporting. Contact Conjunction, c/o 25 Wycliffe Road, Cambridge CB1 3JD.

**DRAKCON 90.** August 18-19 at the College Dining Room, Northern College of Education, Hilton Drive, Aberdeen, on Saturday 18th from 9am to 11.30pm and on Sunday from 9am to 8.30pm. Games (mainly rolegames) convention which raises money for famine relief. £5 admission (£3.50 under 16s) for both days (£1 reduction for bookings before July 9). £3 for one day (£2 for under 16s). B&B accommodation is available at £10/night. Contact Sandy Douglas, 13 Springbank Terrace, Aberdeen AB1 2LS.

**ARENA 90.** August 25 1990 at the Addison Centre, Addison Park, Kempston, Beds. Wargames and role-playing convention organised by the Bedford Gladiators in association with the Kempston Fun Day and Kempston Lions and Bedfordshire County Council. Wargames, trade stands, role-playing, boardgames, bring and buy and painting competitions. Admission £2, under 14 £1. For further detail, contact Dave Wilkin, ☎ 0234 857394 or Ian Fellows, ☎ 0234 261254.

**MANORCON PBM** September 7-9, 1990 at High Hall, Birmingham University. Boardgames, PBM, computer & role-playing games, competitions, football tournaments and bar. For details write to Peter Calcraft, 13 Royal Mews, Princes St, Dorchester, Dorset ST1 1RL.

**MINDGAMES 90** November 10 and 11, 1990 at the Novotel in Hammersmith. An international showcase for all types of gaming. Contact Simon Titley/Bridget Seddon, Waltham Business Services, 105a Queen Street, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 1LR. ☎ 0628 770676.

## EUROPE

**SPIEL 90** October 25-28, 1990 at the Grugehalle, Essen. The biggest, the best, still at the same venue. Stay tuned for more details as they come in.

**SPIELEFEST 90** November 23-25, Messepalast, Vienna, Austria. Austria's biggest games convention with more than 20 000 visitors.

## NORTH AMERICA

**DIP-CON XXIII** June 22 to 24, 1990 at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. America's biggest Diplomacy tournament is also the second World Dipcon. UK gamers who want to go should contact Peter Sullivan, 27 Farrer Street, Darlington, Co Durham DL3 6RG before the end of May 1990.

**ORIGINS** June 28 to July 1, 1990 at the Atlanta Hilton and Towers, Atlanta, Georgia. The National Gaming Exposition and Trade Show featuring tournaments in all types of gaming, panels, workshops, videos etc. Contact Origins 90, Box 47696, Atlanta GA 30363 USA.

**GEN CON** August 9 to 12, 1990 at the MECCA Convention Center, Milwaukee, Wis. Organised by TSR and featuring the 'world' boardgame championships. Contact 1990 Gen Con Game Fair, PO Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147 USA.

## GAMES CLUBS

**BEDFORD GLADIATORS** Wargaming Association caters for all kinds of rolegames and wargames and meets Mondays from 7pm to 11pm at the BUSA club, The Broadway, Bedford. Contact Dave Wilkin ☎ 0234 857394.

**BLACKROD** Wargames Society have regular fortnightly meetings. All types of games are played including historical figure wargames, fantasy rolegames and board games. New members welcome with or without any previous experience. Contact: Trains & Things, 170/172, Chorley New Road, Horwich, Nr Bolton, Lancs. ☎ 0204 669203 or 691895.

**BRITISH OTHELLO FEDERATION** organises tournaments, chooses British champions to play in world championship team, produces instructive and entertaining newsletter twice a year. Contact David Haigh, 62 Romsey Road, Winchester SO 22 5PH.

**CAMBRIDGE GAMES CLUB.** A new club (18+) for board games, wargames, and rolegames meeting one weekday evening per week. Contact Michael English ☎ 0223 440781.

**EVERSHAM** Role-play association. Established four years. Every fortnight, any games played. Contact Paul ☎ 0386 48202.

**GAMES MEETING** every Tuesday at the Bun Shop Pub, Berrylands Rd, Surbiton. 7pm till closing time. Wide variety of board games and role-playing games.

**GLC (R.I.P.)** Wargames Club now meets every Monday night at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (nearest tube Holborn). 6 till 10pm. Boardgames, Wargames, miniatures etc.

**KCPFRPG**, North London, have meetings every Monday, from 6.30pm to 9.45pm. If you're human, elf, dwarf or just about any other race, and you're between 16 and 25, then contact us straight away. We play AD&D, Rolemaster/MERP, Marvel Superheroes, Robotech, Call of Cthulhu and other games. Experienced and non experienced players welcome. Contact Bill, Naomi or Vince ☎ 01-253 6776. Or write to Darren Rogers, c/o KCPFRPG, 92 Central Street, London EC1V.

**LOWESTOFT GAMES CLUB** meets every Monday night. Contact Steve Nichols, ☎ 0502 518625.

**NEW MALDEN & SURBITON** games group meets every other Monday at the Railway Hotel Pub, Coombe Road, New Malden, 7pm till closing time. Miniature figure wargames include Vietnam, Warhammer 40K and others. Board gamers and role-players welcome. Contact Peter ☎ 01-942 5624.

**NIGI** The Northern Ireland Gamers Association will be having regular meetings at Carrickfergus Library. All role-players and boardgamers are welcome. Meetings are held on the last Saturday of each month from 10.30am to 5pm. The aim of the association is to organise gaming in the province and to hold regular tournaments etc. For details contact Jim Johnston at 44 Hillcrest Drive, Newtownabbey BT36 6EQ. ☎ 0232 853730 (after six).

**NOTTINGHAM AND DERBY** Games Club meets every Thursday at the Queens Walk Community Centre, The Meadows, Nottingham. 7-10.30pm. Contact Mick Haytack ☎ 0332 511898.

**SIGMA GAMES CLUB** meets every 2nd, 4th, and 5th (if applicable) Sunday of the month at the Intervarsity Club, Bedford Chambers, King St. Covent Garden, London. 3-10.30pm. Games played include Empire Builder, Tallsman, Titan, 1830, and many more.

**STOKE-ON-TRENT** Wargames Group meets each Friday at 38A Trentham Rd, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent. We have eight rooms permanently set up for gaming and interests run from historical wargames to SF battles to fantasy role-playing. For further details, ☎ Stoke (0783) 615535.

## EUROPE

**FANTASY WORLD** Role-playing Club in Munich. For more info contact Detlov Motz, Vorholzerstr. 4, 8000 Munich 71. ☎ 089 795244.

**SPIELE KREIS WIEN** meets every 3rd week in Vienna on Wednesdays and Thursdays, playing all kinds of games. Contact: Ferdinand de Cassan, A-2285 Leopoldsdorf. ☎ -43/2216 2223.

**SPIELRATZN** at the Gross Wirt pub every other Friday. Winthstr. Munich 19, Germany. For further details contact: Bernd Brunnhofer ☎ 089 264150.

## USA

**EAST VALLEY** Advanced Squad Leader Club. Contact Pierce Ostrander, 5046 E Decatur St, Mesa, AZ 85205. ☎ 602 985 4505.

**HEXAGON SOCIETY** meets every first and third Saturday From 10am to 6pm. Contact James McCormack, 1450 Harmon Ave, 224c Las Vegas, NV 89119. ☎ 702 794 3523 (evenings)

**HISTORICAL SIMULATIONS SOCIETY** of Charlottesville, Virginia meets every Friday at 7pm in New Cabell Hall Rm 236. Contact Derek Croxton, 1711 Galloway Drive, Charlottesville VA 22901 ☎ 804-296 4897.

**MIAMI GAMING CLUB** seeks new members. All types of games. Meetings are once a week from 7pm to 11pm, Thurs or Fri at 7200 SW 7th St Miami. Contact Rex ☎ 264 9752, or Steve ☎ 271 5418.

**NEW ORLEANS GAMES CLUB** seeks players for all kinds of games. Contact Greg Schloesser, 3800 Briant Drive, Marrero, LA 70072. ☎ 504 347 7145.

**NORTH SHORE GAMES CLUB** meets once a month somewhere in Massachusetts. Tournaments, food, and even a newsletter.

**PENN-JERSEY GAMERS** meet monthly and play most games, but no role-playing. Newsletter, tournaments, raffles. Contact Jim Vroom, 2290 Galloway Rd, A-23, Bensalem, PA 19020.

**SANTA FE SPRINGS GAMERS ASSOC.** looking for new members to play boardgames and Role-Playing games. Tues/Thurs 5-9pm. Saturdays 9am-5pm. at the Town Centre Hall, 11740 E Telegraph Rd, Santa Fe Springs, CA. ☎ 213 863 4896 (club hours only).

**SCHENECTADY WARGAMERS ASSOCIATION:** regular meetings and weekend conventions, tournaments of Axis & Allies, Empire Builder, Machlaviell. Role-playing too. Contact: Eric Paperman, 418 Vliet Blvd. Cohoes, NY 12047. ☎ 581 237 5874.

**WASHINGTON GAMERS ASSOC.** meets monthly, and publishes a bimonthly newsletter (\$5 for six issues). Contact Dennis Wang, 2200 Huntington Ave, Alexandria, VA 22303. ☎ 703 960 1259

**WINDY CITY WARGAMERS** meet twice a month. Miniatures and board wargames, plus newsletter. Louie Tokarz, 5724 W 106th St, Chicago Ridge, IL 60415. ☎ 312 857 7060.

## ORGANISING A CONVENTION? LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS FOR YOUR CLUB?

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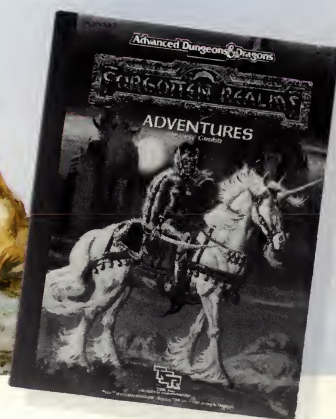
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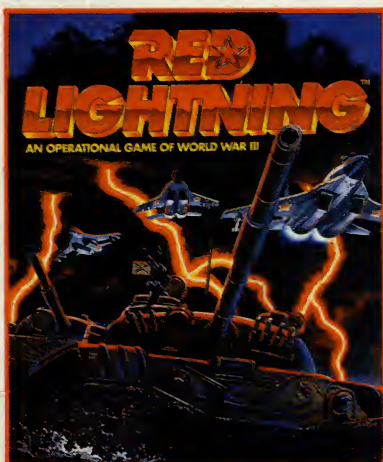
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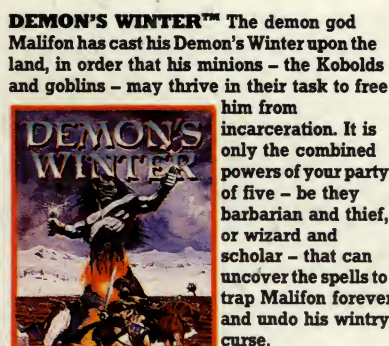
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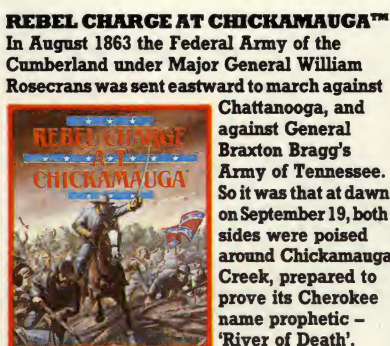
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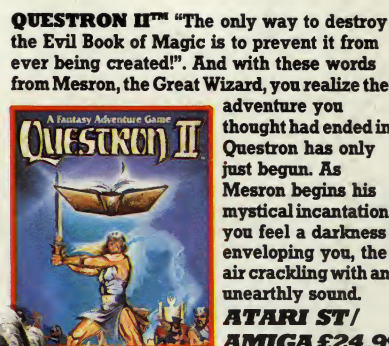
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